This vain gay thing sets up for man, But see m^r fate attends him
The pow'd'ring Barber first began, The Barber Surgeon ends

This vain gay thing sets up for man, But see m^r fate attends him
The pow'd'ring Barber first began, The Barber Surgeon ends

AN

ESSAY

In Defence of the

FEMALE SEX.

In which are inſerted the

CHARACTERS

OF

A Pedant,
A Squire,
A Beau,
A Vertuoſo,
A Poetaſter,
A City-Critick, &c.

In a Letter to a Lady.

Written by a Lady.

The Third Edition with Additions.

Since each is fond of his own ugly Face;
Why ſhou'd you when we hold it break the Glaſs?

Prol. to Sir *F. Flutter.*

LONDON,

Printed for *A. Roper* at the *Black Boy*, and *R. Clavel* at the *Peacock*, both in *Fleetſtreet*, 1697.

To Her Royal Highneſs the Princeſs Anne *of* Denmark.

MADAM,

IF in adventuring to lay this little Piece at your Highneſſes Feet, and humbly to beg your Royal Protection of it, I have preſum'd too far, be pleas'd to impute it to your own moſt gracious Goodneſs, the knowledge of which encourag'd me. Our Sex are by Nature tender of their own Off-ſpring, and may be allow'd to have more fondneſs for thoſe of the Brain, then any other; becauſe they are ſo few, and meet with ſo many Enemies at their firſt appearance in the World. I hope therefore to find pardon, if like an indulgent Parent, I have endeavour'd to advance my firſt Born, by entering it very early into your Highneſſes Service.

I have not presum'd to approach your Highness out of any Confidence in the merits of this Essay, but of the Cause which it pleads, wherein the Honour of the whole Sex seem'd to exact of me no less a Patronage than that of the Best, as well as Greatest among 'em, whom they are all ambitious to see at their head. I have only endeavour'd to reduce the Sexes to a Level, and by Arguments to raise Ours to an Equallity at most with the Men: But your Highness by illustrious Example daily convinces the World of our Superiority, and we see with wonder, Vertues in you, Madam, greater than your Birth. In this I am peculiarly happy, that I am exempted from the common Task of other Dedicators, who lie under an Obligation of publishing to the World those Excellencies of their Patrons, which perhaps appear no where but in their Epistles. In me it were as great folly, to pretend to

make

make known the Illuſtrious Qualities of your Highneſs, as it wou'd be to go about to demonſtrate by Argument, that the Sun ſhin'd, to a Crowd that are warm'd by the Influence of it.

I had attempted the Character of a conſummate Woman, could I, tho' but faintly have ſhaddow'd the inimitable Graces of your Highneſs; but the impoſſibillity of that Task forc'd me to deſiſt. It were eaſy here to lanch into thoſe glorious particulars, which affirmed of any other than your Royal Highneſs, would have been extravagance of Flattery; but to you Injuſtice, and in me the higheſt preſumption, to attempt with my feeble Hand thoſe perfections, which the ableſt muſt fall infinitely ſhort of. The luſtre of your Royal Vertues, Madam, like the Sun, gives us warmth and light, and while at a modeſt diſtance we admire it, improves our ſight, which too bold a

view confounds, yet the meaneſt and moſt ignorant ſee thoſe Glories, which the moſt exquiſite Artiſt can never expreſs. The World therefore will rather juſtify than comdemn my conduct, if I do not wrong ſo bright an Original with a dark obſcure Copy.

Madam, Tho' the world may condemn my performance, it muſt applaud my choice in this Addreſs, and own that had I known as well how to Argue, as to Inſtance, I muſt infallibly have Triumph'd over all Oppoſition. It may be eaſie to evade, or baffle the force of my Arguments, but it is impoſſible without the utmoſt Stupidity and Injuſtice, to deny the manifeſt Advantages of thoſe Illuſtrious Graces, which raiſe your Highneſs ſo far above theirs as well as your own Sex. In this I have imitated the conduct of prudent Generals, who, when they doubt the ſufficiency of their ſtrength, retire to ſome ſtrong Fort, and reſt ſecure

cure under the Protection of it.

There is yet another Reaſon, *Madam*, which tho' the leaſt juſtifiable, was nevertheleſs moſt prevalent with me to devote this Eſſay to your Highneſs. My Ambition to ſhew the profound Reſpects I have always had for your Highneſs, would not ſuffer me to let ſlip any occaſion of expreſſing it, even tho' I bluſh for the meanes of it. Thus I find my ſelf reduc'd by my Zeal, to the condition of poor Tenants, who muſt expoſe their Poverty, to ſhew their Affection to their Lord in a worthleſs Preſent. I am ſenſible of the raſhneſs of my Ambition in aſpiring to the Patronage of Your Highneſs, and the need I have of an Apology; but were I able to make one as I ought, I ſhould have taken care to have had leſs occaſion for it. Yet I doubt not from Your Goodneſs that Indulgence, which I cannot expect from Your Juſtice, nor but that you will (like Heaven,

whoſe more immediate Images Princes are) accept my unprofitable Service, for the ſincerity with which it is tender'd. If my unfeign'd Submiſſion may procure pardon for my Preſumption, that Your Happineſs may equal Your illuſtrious Vertues, and Your Royal Perſon be as far out of the reach of Fortune, as your Fame and Honour of Detraction, ſhall ever be the prayers of

Madam,

Your Royal Highneſs's

moſt Humble, moſt

Obedient, and moſt

Devouted Servant

PREFACE.

PRefaces to moſt Books, are like Prolocutors to Puppet-Shows, they come firſt to tell you what Figures are to be preſented, and what Tricks they are to play. According therefore to ancient and laudable Cuſtom, I have th ught fit to let you know by way of Preface, or Advertiſement, (call it which you pleaſe) that here are many fine Figures within to be ſeen, as well worth your curioſity, as any in Smithfield *at* Bartholomew *Tide. I will not deny, Reader, but that you may have ſeen ſome of 'em there already; to thoſe that have, I have little more to ſay, than that if they have a mind to ſee them again in Effigie, they may do it here. What is it you wou'd have? Here are St.* George's, Batemans, John Dories, Punchinello's, *and the* Creation of the World, *or what's as good; here's the* German Artiſt *too, or one that can ſhew more Tricks than he: If all this will not invite you, y'are grown more*

ſqueamiſh

ſqueamiſh of late, Gentlemen, than you us'd to be, and the poor Bookſeller will make but an indifferent Market of you. Well, let the worſt come to the worſt, 'tis but ſhifting the ſcene to Smithfield, *and making an Intereſt in half a dozen Vizor-Masks to be ſure of your Company: But he, good Man, is deſirous to pleaſe you at firſt hand, and therefore has put a fine Picture in the front to invite you in, ſo like ſome of you (as he proteſts) that you ought never look in a Glaſs again, if it offends you. For my part, I declare, he has acted clear againſt my Opinion in this caſe, and ſo he has been told; for many a poor Man has loſt the ſhowing of his Monſter, by gratifying the curioſity of the gaping Crowd with too exact a picture without doors. Beſides, there's an unlucky Rogue of a left-handed Barber, that looks like an ill Omen in the beginning. He was told too, that if he wou'd pleaſe moſt of you, he ought to take example by your Glaſſes, and flatter you. Yet he continued obſtinate and unmoveable to all theſe weighty Reaſons, and is ſo fondly bent for his Picture, that he reſolv'd againſt all advice to have it.*

Nay,

Nay, and he wou'd have Rhimes underneath it too, which, he ſays, weigh more with you, than all the Reaſon in the world. I thought fit to let you know this, that the Bookſeller might not loſe the credit of his Fancy, if it takes with you, as he is perſwaded it will. For you muſt know, I am a great lover of ſtrict Juſtice, and therefore would by no means Rob, or Defraud him of the Glory of his Invention, or by any ſiniſter way ſullie, or diminiſh the Honour, or Reputation of his Parts and Ingenuity. For the ſame Reaſon likewiſe I muſt acquaint you, that the Rhimes are none of mine neither; and now my Hand is in, I don't much care if I tell you, that I am not very good at that ingenious Recreation, called Crambo, *from which ſome riſe to be very conſiderable Rhimers. This now is more than I was oblig'd to tell you, and therefore I hope no body will deny, but that I deal ingenuouſly at leaſt with you.*

This one would think were Preface ſufficient; but there are ſome Men ſo impertinently curious, that they muſt needs have a Reaſon for every thing, that

that is done in the World, tho' it were in their favour (for which perhaps it were hard to give a good one) when it were their Intereſt to be ſatisfied, and thankful without further enquiry. To comply therefore in ſome meaſure with the humour of theſe People, if any one think fit to peruſe this Book, I muſt tell 'em very freely, that I was ſo far from aiming to oblige, or diſoblige 'em by it, that it was never intended for their View. It was occaſion'd by a private Converſation, between ſome Gentlemen and Ladies, and written at the requeſt, and for the Diverſion of one Lady more particularly, by whom with my conſent it was communicated to two or three more of both Sexes, my Friends likewiſe.

By them I was with abundance of Complements importun'd to make it publick; now tho' I do with good Reaſon attribute much more, of what was ſaid to me upon this Occaſion, to their good Breeding and Friendſhip, than to their real Opinions of my Performance; yet I have ſo much ſatisfaction in their Sincerity and Friendſhip, as to be confident they would not ſuffer, much leſs per-

perſwade me to expoſe to the world any thing, of which they doubted ſo far, as to think it would not be tollerably acceptable. Nor have I leſs aſſurance of their Judgment and Skill in things of this nature, beſide that I have been inform'd by ſome of 'em, that it has been ſeen, and favourably receiv'd by ſome Gentlemen, whom the world thinks no incompetent Judges. After all this Encouragement, I ſuppoſe, I ſhall not be thought vain, if, as I pretend not to the applauſe, ſo I fear not the contempt of the world: Tet I preſume not ſo far upon the Merits of what I have written, as to make my Name publick with it. I have elſewhere held, that Vanity was almoſt the univerſal mover of all our Actions, and conſequently of mine, as well as of others; yet it is not ſtrong enough in me, to induce me to bring my Name upon the publick ſtage of the World.

There are many Reaſons, that oblige me to this cautious, reſerv'd way of procedure; tho' I might otherwiſe be very ambitious of appearing in the defence of my Sex, cou'd I perſwade my ſelf, that I was able to write any thing

thing ſutable to the dignity of the Subject, which I am not vain enough to think. This indeed is one Reaſon, becauſe I am ſenſible it might have been much better defended by abler Pens, ſuch as many among our own Sex are; though I believe ſcarce thus much wou'd have been expected from me, by thoſe that know me. There is likewiſe another Reaſon, which was yet more prevalent with me, and with thoſe few Friends whom I conſulted about it, which is this; There are a ſort of Men, that upon all occaſions think themſelves more concern'd; and more thought of than they are, and that, like Men that are deaf, or have any other notorious Defect, can ſee no body whiſper, or laugh, but they think 'tis at themſelves. Theſe Men are apt to think, that every ridiculous deſcription they meet with, was intended more particularly for ſome one or other of them; as indeed it is hard to paint any thing compleat in their ſeveral Kinds, without hitting many of their particular Features, even without drawing from them. The knowledge of this, with the conſideration of the tender-

neſs

neſs of Reputation in our Sex, (which as our delicateſt Fruits and fineſt Flowers are moſt obnoxious to the injuries of Weather, is ſubmitted to every infectious Blaſt of malicious Breath) made me very cautious, how I expos'd mine to ſuch poiſonous Vapours. I was not ignorant, how liberal ſome Men are of their Scandal, whenever provok'd, eſpecially by a Woman; and how ready the ſame Men are to be ſo, tho' upon never ſo miſtaken Grounds. This made me reſolve to keep 'em in Ignorance of my Name, and if they have a mind to find me out, let 'em catch me (if they can) as Children at Blindmans Buff do one another, Hoodwinkt; and I am of Opinion I have room enough to put 'em out of Breath before they come near me.

The Event has in Effect prov'd my ſuſpicious Prophetick; for there are (as I am inform'd) already ſome, ſo forward to intereſt themſelves againſt me, that they take Characters upon themſelves, before they ſee 'em; and, for fear they ſhould want ſome Body to throw their Dirt at, with equal Ignorance and Injuſtice, Father this Piece

upon

upon the Gentleman, who was ſo kind as to take care of the Publication of it, only to excuſe me from appearing. This made me once reſolve to oppoſe my Innocence to their Clamour, and perfix my Name, which I thought I was bound to do in Juſtice to him. In this Reſolution I had perſiſted, had not the very ſame Gentleman generouſly perſwaded, and over-rul'd me to the contrary, repreſenting how weak a defence Innocence is againſt Calumny, how open the Ears of the Wold are, and how greedily they ſuck in any thing to the prejudice of a Woman; and that (to uſe his own Expreſſion) the ſcandal of ſuch Men, was like Dirt thrown by Children, and Fools at random, and without Provocation, it would dawb filthily at firſt, though it were eaſily waſht off again: Adding, that he deſird me not to be under any concern for him; for he valued the Malice of ſuch men, as little, as their Friendſhip, the one was as feeble, as tother falſe.

I ſuppoſe I need make no Apology to my own Sex for the meaneſs of this defence; the bare intention of ſerving 'em will I hope be accepted, and of

Men

Men, the Candid and Ingenuous I am ſure will not quarrel with me for any thing in this little Book; ſince there is nothing in it, which was not drawn from the ſtricteſt Reaſon I was Miſtreſs of, and the beſt Obſervations I was able to make, except a ſtart or two only concerning the Salique Law, and the Amazons, *which, if they divert not the Reader, can't offend him.*

I ſhall not trouble the Reader with any account of the Method I have obſerv'd, he will eaſily diſcover that in reading the Piece it ſelf. I ſhall only take notice to him of one thing, which with a little attention to what he reads he will readily find to be true, that is, that the Characters were not written out of any Wanton Humour, or Malicious Deſign to characterize any Particular Perſons, but to illuſtrate what I have ſaid upon the ſeveral Heads, under which they are rang'd, and repreſent not ſingle Men, but ſo many Clans or Diviſions of Men, that play the Fool ſeriouſly in the World. If any Individual ſeem to be more peculiarly markt, it is becauſe he is perhaps more notorious to the World, by ſome one or more Arti-

cles of the General Character here given. I am ſure that there is no Man, who is but moderately Acquainted with the World, eſpecially this Town, but may find half a Dozen, or more Originals for every Picture. After all, if any Man have ſo little Wit, as to appropriate any of theſe Characters to himſelf, He takes a liberty I have hitherto never given him, but ſhall do it now in the Words of a Great Man, If any Fool finds the Cap fit him, let him put it on.

There are ſome Men, (I hear) who will not allow this Piece to be written by a Woman; did I know what Eſtimate to make of their Judgments, I might perhaps have a higher Opinion of this Triffle, than I ever yet had. For little thought while I was writing this, that any Man (eſpecially an Ingenious Man) ſhould have the ſcandal of being the reputed Author. For he muſt think it ſcandalous to be made to Father a Womans Productions unlawfully. But theſe Gentlemen, I ſuppoſe, believe there is more Wit, than they'l find in this Piece; upon the Credit of the Bookſeller, whoſe Intereſt it is to flatter

it

it. But were it as well written as I could wish it, or as the Subject wou'd bear, and deserves; I see no reason why our Sex shou'd be robb'd of the Honour of it; Since there have been Women in all Ages, whose Writings might vie with those of the greatest Men, as the Present Age as well as past can testifie. I shall not trouble the Reader with their names, because I wou'd not be thought so vain, as to rank my self among 'em; and their names are already too well known, and celebrated to receive any additional Lustre from so weak Encomiums as mine, I pretend not to imitate, much less to Rival those Illustrious Ladies, who have done so much Honour to their Sex, and are unanswerable Proofs of what I contend for. I only wish, that some Ladies now living among us (whose names I forbear to mention in regard to their Modesty) wou'd exert themselves, and give us more recent Instances, who are both by Nature and Education sufficiently qualified to do it, which I pretend not to. I freely own to the Reader, that I know no other Tongue besides my Native, except French, *in which I am but very*

moderately skill'd. I plead not this to excuse the meaneſs of my Performance; becauſe I know, I may reaſonably be ask'd, why I was ſo forward to write; For that I have already given my reaſons above, if they will not ſatisfie the Reader, he muſt endeavour to pleaſe himſelf with better, for I am very little ſolicitous about the matter. I ſhall only add, that for my Good Will I hope the Favour of my own Sex, which will ſatisfie my Ambition.

To

To the Moſt Ingenious Mrs.—— or her admirable Defence of Her Sex.

LOng have we ſung the Fam'd *Orinda*'s praiſe,
And own'd *Aſtrea*'s Title to the Bays,
We to their Wit have paid the Tribute due,
But ſhou'd be Bankrupt before juſt to you.
Sweet flowing Numbers, and fine Thoughts they writ.
But you Eternal Truths, as well as Wit.
In them the Force of Harmony we find,
In you the Strength, and Vigour of the Mind.
Dark Clouds of Prejudice obſcur'd their Verſe,
You with Victorious Proſe thoſe Clouds diſperſe:
Thoſe Foggs, which wou'd not to their Flame ſubmit,
Vaniſh before your Riſing Sun of Wit.
Like Stars, they only in Themſelves were bright,
The whole Sex ſhines by your reflected Light.
Our Sex have long thro' Uſurpation reign'd,
And by their Tyranny their Rule maintain'd.
Till wanton grown with Arbitrary Sway
Depos'd by you They practice to obey,
Proudly ſubmitting, when ſuch Graces meet,
Beauty by Nature, and by Conqueſt Wit.
For Wit they had on their own Sex entail'd,
Till for your ſelf, and Sex you thus prevail'd.
Thrice happy Sex! Whoſe Foes ſuch Pow'r diſarms,
And gives freſh Luſtre to your native Charms,
Whoſe Nervous Senſe couch'd in cloſe Methodlies,

Clear as her Soul, and piercing as her Eyes,
If any yet ſo ſtupid ſhou'd appear,
As ſtill to doubt, what ſhe has made ſo clear,
Her Beautie's Arguments they would allow,
And to Her Eyes their full Converſion owe.
And by Experiment the World convince.
The Force of Reaſon's leſs, than that of Senſe.
Your Sex you with ſuch Charming Grace defend,
While that you vindicate, you Ours amend:
We in your Glaſs may ſee each ſoul defect,
And may not only ſee, but may correct.
In vain old *Greece* her Sages would compare,
They taught what Men ſhou'd be, you what they are.
With doubtfull Notions they Mankind perplext,
And with unpracticable Precept vext.
In vain they ſtrove wild Paſſions to reclaim,
Uncertain what they were, or whence they came.
But you, who have found out their certain Source,
May with a happier Hand divert their Courſe.
Themſelves ſo little did thoſe Sages know,
That to their Failings We their Learning owe:
Their Vanity firſt caus'd 'em to aſpire,
And with fierce Wranglings ſet all *Greece* on Fire:
Thus into ſects they ſplit the *Grecian* youth,
Contending more for Victory than Truth.
Your Speculations nobler Ends perſue,
They aim not to be Popular, but true.
You with ſtrict Juſtice in an equal Light,
Expoſe both Wit and Folly to our Sight.
Yet as the Bee ſecure on Poyſon feeds,
Extracting Honey from the rankeſt Weeds:
So ſafely you in Fools Inſtructours find,
And Wiſdom in the Follies of mankind.
With purer Waves henceforth ſhall Satyr flow,
And we this change to your chaſt Labours owe;
Satyr before from a Polluted Source
Brought Native Filth, augmented in its courſe.
No longer muddy ſhall thoſe Streams appear,
Which

Which you have purg'd, and made ſo ſweet, and clear.
Well may you Wit to us a wonder ſeem,
So ſtrong's the Current, yet ſo clear the ſtream,
Deep, but not Dull, thro' each tranſparent Line
We ſee the Gems, which at the Bottom ſhine.
To your Correction freely we ſubmit,
Who teach us Modeſty as well as Wit.
Our Sex with Bluſhes muſt your Conqueſt own,
While yours prepare the Garlands you have won.
Your Fame ſecure long as your Sex ſhall laſt,
Nor Time, nor Envy ſhall your Lawrels blaſt.

James Drake.

To Madam — on the Occaſion of her Eſſay, *in Defence of her Sex.*

I can't but ſmile at the Fantaſtick Malice of ſome, that love me not, for their Spightful clamor has effected that, which the kind Inſinuations of ſome of my miſtaken Friends, in vain attempted, and fixt upon me an honour, and upon themſelves Characters, they wou'd be glad to claw off again, tho' at the expence of their Skins. Caprice, and Humor have indeed a great ſhare in the Movements, even of the wiſeſt of Mankind; but I never met before with ſuch a frollickſome piece of Malice, as to ſlander a Man into Reputation.

I'm none of the firſt, that have ſhin'd by the luſtre of another's worth, and valu'd themſelves upon't too: But I believe, Madam, you find but few Precedents of Men, that have taken ſo much pains to undeceive the World to their own diſadvantage. I have known Men (and ſo I fancy have you too

too) and those of no mean Reputation, that have affected to look grave and compos'd at the Repetition of another Man's Jest, that it might be taken for their own; and, to say truth, if the World will mistake Men for greater, or Wiser, than they are, there are few that have Ingenuity enough not to help on the Cheat. Your Conduct, Madam, is very different, You conquer without triumphing, and like a generous Enemy scorn to insult o're those you vanquish. You leave the Spoil to such as S—n, * you are contented with Victory, they, like peasants after the rout, of an Army, come in only to do the Butcherly Execution. Yet thus to keep your self conceal'd, and refuse the Honour, is a strain beyond the Gallantry of Romance; there the Knight, tho' he atchieves Incognito, always lifts up his Beaver to receive the Favour, and the Complement. But you, like your Laurels, affect the Shade, and, like the richest Jewels, are content to have your Lustre try'd in the Dark.

* *Another Essay. Session of Poets 96, 6 Characters of a Beau, &c.*

This Procedure of Yours, Madam, essentially distinguishes your Character from that of some, that malign it. They are so unwilling to acknowledge themselves defeated by you, that they endeavour to force the Honour, tho' unmerited, upon me, and extreamly regretted

regretted by them; and disdain a chastisement from a Female Hand, tho' too weak to oppose it. You draw too well, to have occasion to write under your Pieces: for there is scarce an Eminent Fool in Town, but owns his Picture. Yet so far are they from mending for your smart correction, (so much *Solomon* is wiser than Mr. *Dryden*) so far from profiting by the Modesty of your Example, that instead of suppressing their names to what they write, they are ready upon all occasions to put 'em to what others write. Not a *French Journal*, *Mercure*, *Farce*, or *Opera* can scape their pillaging, so violently they affect the Reputation of Wits. Yet the utmost they arrive at, is but a sort of *Jack a Lanthorn Wit*, that like the Sunshine with wanton Boys with Fragments of Looking Glass reflect in Men's Eyes, dazles the Weak-sighted, and troubles the strong. These are the Muses Black Guard, that, like those of our Camps, tho' they have no share in the danger, or Honour, yet have the greatest in the Plunder, that indifferently strip all that lie before 'em, dead or alive, Friends or Enemies. A stray Horse is safer in the *Spanish* Quarters than an Anonymous Piece, Scene, or Line among them, and they are as unrefunding as a cast Mistress, and as unac-

unacknowledging as a *Dutch* Tradeſman. Whatever they light on is *Terra Incognita*, and they claim the right of diſcoverers, that is, of giving their Names to it. They, like the Parſon and Clark, are the common Godfathers, and anſwer frequently what the true Parents are aſham'd to own: They fancy they make a Splendid figure in print, but like the *Phoſphorus* (which the Chymiſts extract from fermented Ordure) with all their glimmering, and ſham fire, they retain the Scent (pardon the homelineſs of the expreſſion, Madam,) of the Original, Sir Reverence. Theſe Fellows are in their Humours ſomething a-kin to one (that I once knew) who never met a Man very drunk in an Evening, but he led him to his own Door to diſcharge, that he might in the morning have the Credit of his Debauchery; ſo theſe will ſcarce ſuffer any one Scribler to enjoy undiſputed the Scandal of his own Nonſenſe.

Methinks, *Madam*, I begin to find the Ambition of an Author creeping upon me, and to feel (like ſome greater Men than my ſelf) a ſtrange itching to forfeit, by ſomething of my own production, the Reputation I have got by yours. This thing call'd *Reputation*, Madam, is a very unaccountable thing, and baffles a very celebrated Axiom,

Axiom, or two of the Schools; for both they give, and they loſe it, who never had, nor ever ſhall have any, like prodigal young Heirs, that ſpend their Eſtates before they come at 'em.

I perceive, *Madam*, after this way of digreſſing, it were eaſier to tire your patience than my own; for nothing is more natural (to me at leaſt) than to forget the Deſign we firſt act upon, and write as incoherently as we talk: But whatever that were, I ſhall ſpare you that trouble at preſent, and only beg the continuance of your Friendſhip, which ſhall always be eſteem'd an honour, by

Madam,

Your moſt humble, and

moſt oblig'd Servant,

J. D.

The Lady's Anſwer.

HOwever impertinent the unjuſt Aſperſions of thoſe that envie you, may appear to your ſelf, and others; yet methinks, there is a ſort of Generoſity in it, that makes 'em deny me Juſtice with a Complement: If they will not ſuffer me to own my Triffle, I am at leaſt oblig'd to 'em, that in aſcribing it to you, they confeſs it deſerves a better Author. I am far from imagining, that this was intended as a Civility to me, which was indeed deſign'd as an Injury to you: But it has laid freſh Obligations upon me, ſince it leſſens not their Reſpect, tho' you ſuffer in the Imputation, and lets me ſee that you can with all the Gallantry of a Courtier engage in a Friends Cauſe, and ſcorn the Court Trick of deſerting it, when it grows troubleſome, or difficult. 'Tis no ſmall comfort to me, that I have ſuch a Champion againſt ſuch petty Adverſaries; for tho' a Man can't decently draw his Sword upon e'ry yelping little Cur, that barks at him in the ſtreet, yet if they ſnarl too near his heels, he may ſpurn 'em without offence to his gravity. To oppoſe ſuch Fellows their own way, were like quarrelling

quarrelling with the common Scavengers, and throwing Filth about to bewray themſelves and annoy the Neighborhood. Such immoral Swine ought to be ſubmitted to the Eccleſiaſtical Cenſure, and do Pennance in one clean ſheet, for the filthy Rheams they've abus'd the World with.

I ſend you herewith the Enclos'd, that you may ſee there are thoſe, that tho' they differ in my Opinion, yet can treat me with good Breeding: The Candour and Ingenuity of this Gentleman, makes me regret his being unknown to me, becauſe it deprives me of the proper means of Acknowledgment: For tho' I can't in all points mention'd be convinc'd by his Arguments, yet I muſt confeſs my Self throughout overcome, and made a Proſelite to his Civility. I wiſh I had his Leave to make it publick, which I dare not preſume to do without it: I am confident e'ry civil Woman, as well as Man, wou'd think her ſelf oblig'd to him, even while he pleads for the ſubjection of her whole Sex. If I ſhould ever be induc'd to proſecute this Subject (which is far from being exhauſted by all that I, or others, have written upon it) any farther; I ſhou'd think my ſelf oblig'd to yield to his Arguments, or produce my own Reaſons for my Diſſent; and ſhall, I am confident, have more cauſe to bluſh for his Compliements, than his Oppoſition.

Here, Sir, Gratitude compels me to return you and him Thanks, for thoſe obli-

ging

ging fine things you are pleas'd to ſay of me; tho' they have an effect on me quite contrary to your Deſign; for, I believe, you generouſly intended to encourage me by 'em; but they have humbl'd me, by giving ſuch admirable means to meaſure the diſproportion between how I write, and how I ought to write. I am ſenſible of the native courſeneſs of my Mettal, (tho' without the Alloy ſome wou'd find in it) and if it has met with general Acceptance, 'tis the Stamp you have put upon it has made it current: Yet, with the ſincerity of a Friend, permit me to adviſe you againſt my own Intereſt: Let your Complaiſance prevail no more againſt your Opinion, for fear the World ſhou'd ſuſpect, that you had either loſt your Judgment, or alter'd your Standard. 'Tis no vain Opinion of my own Luſtre, that makes me ſeek Obſcurity, but a juſt Conſciouſneſs; that like a Glow-worm, 'tis to that only I am beholding for the notice that is taken of me; and if I Affect the ſhade, 'tis out of a fear of diſappearing in the Sun-ſhine of better Authors. Nor am I without my Apprehenſions, that your obliging Letter, like the Sun let in upon a common fire, may extinguiſh what it was deſign'd to cheriſh. This Advantage however I reap by being unknown, that I frequently hear unſuſpected, the unbiaſs'd Opinions of thoſe that criticize upon me, and ſcarce, without Scorn, hear moſt Men pronounce it a Performance above the

Abil ty

Ability of a Woman, yet none Answer the Arguments in it to the contrary. But of all the nice Judges, the pleasanteſt are those that think the Stile too Maſculine: But, with their leave, I think I may boldly advance, that let them form themſelves with equal Care, by the ſame Models, and they will no more be able to diſcern a Man's Stile from a Woman's, than they can tell whether this was written with a Goose Quill, or a Gander's: But I ſhall not trouble you, nor my ſelf any longer about 'em, but leave 'em to the liberty of their cenſure, and only aſſure you, that I am

Sir,

Feb. 15. 1696. Your real Friend and Servant

AN

ESSAY

In Defence of the

Female Sex, &c.

THE Converſation we had 'tother day, makes me, Dear *Madam*, but more ſenſible of the unreaſonableneſs of your deſire; which obliges me to inform you further upon a Subject, wherein I have more need of your inſtruction. The ſtrength of Judgment, ſprightly Fancy, and admirable Addreſs, you ſhew'd upon that Occaſion, ſpeak you ſo perfect a Miſtreſs of that Argument (as I doubt not but you are of any other that you pleaſe to engage in) that whoever, would ſpeak or write well on it, ought firſt to be your

Schollar. Yet to let you ſee how abſolutely you may command me, I had rather be your *Eccho*, than be ſilent when You bid me ſpeak, and beg your excuſe rather for my Failures, than want of Complacence. I know You will not accuſe me for a Plagiary if I return You nothing, but what I have glean'd from You, when You conſider, that I pretend not to make a Preſent, but to pay the Intereſt only of a Debt. Nor can you tax me with Vanity, ſince no Importunity of a Perſon leſs lov'd or valu'd by me than your ſelf could have extorted thus much from me. This Conſideration leaves me no room to doubt but that you will with your uſual Candour pardon thoſe Defects, and correct thoſe Errors, which proceed only from an over forward Zeal to oblige You, though to my own Diſadvantage.

The defence of our Sex againſt ſo many and ſo great Wits as have ſo ſtrongly attack'd it, may juſtly ſeem a Task too difficult for a Wo-

man

man to attempt. Not that I can, or ought to yield, that we are by Nature leſs enabled for ſuch an Enterprize, than Men are; which I hope at leaſt to ſhew plauſible Reaſons for, before I have done: But becauſe through the Uſurpation of Men, and the Tyranny of Cuſtom (here in *England* eſpecially) there are at moſt but few, who are by Education, and acquir'd Wit, or Letters, ſufficiently quallified for ſuch an Undertaking. For my own part I ſhall readily own, that as few as there are, there may be and are abundance, who in their daily Converſations approve themſelves much more able, and ſufficient Aſſertors of our Cauſe, than my ſelf; and I am ſorry that either their Buſineſs, their other Diverſions, or too great Indulgence of their Eaſe, hinder them from doing publick Juſtice to their Sex. The Men by Intereſt or Inclination are ſo generally engag'd againſt us, that it is not to be expected, that any one Man of Wit ſhould ariſe ſo generous as to engage in our Quar-

rel, and be the Champion of our Sex againſt the Injuries and Oppreſſions of his own. Thoſe Romantick days are over, and there is not ſo much as a *Don Quixot* of the Quill left to ſuccour the diſtreſſed Damſels. 'Tis true, a Feint of ſomething of this Nature was made three or four Years ſince by one; but how much ſoever his Engenia may be oblig'd to him, I am of Opinion the reſt of her Sex are but little beholding to him. For as you rightly obſerv'd, *Madam*, he has taken more care to give an Edge to his Satyr, than force to his Apology; he has play'd a ſham Prize, and receives more thruſts than he makes; and like a falſe Renegade fights under our Colours only for a fairer Opportunity of betraying us. But what could be expected elſe from a Beau? An Animal that can no more commend in earneſt a Womans Wit, than a Man's Perſon, and that compliments ours, only to ſhew his own good Breeding and Parts. He levels his Scandal at the whole Sex,

and

and thinks us ſufficiently fortified, if out of the Story of Two Thouſand Years he has been able to pick up a few Examples of Women illuſtrious for their Wit, Learning or Vertue, and Men infamous for the contrary; though I think the moſt inveterate of our Enemies would have ſpar'd him that labour, by granting that all Ages have produc'd Perſons famous or infamous of both Sexes; or they muſt throw up all pretence to Modeſty, or Reaſon.

I have neither Learning, nor Inclination to make a Precedent, or indeed any uſe to Mr. W's. labour'd Common Place Book; and ſhall leave Pedants and Shool-Boys to rake and tumble the Rubbiſh of Antiquity, and muſter all the *Heroes* and *Heroins* they can find to furniſh matter for ſome wretched Harangue, or ſtuff a miſerable Declamation with inſtead of Senſe or Argument.

Some advantages to be allow'd to the disparity of Education

I shall not enter into any dispute, whether Men, or Women, be generally more ingenious, or learned; that Point must be given up to the advantages Men have over us by their Education, Freedom of Converse, and variety of Business and Company. But when any Comparison is made between 'em, great allowances must be made for the disparity of those Circumstances. Neither shall I contest about the preheminence of our Virtues; I know there are too many Vicious, and I hope there are a great many Virtuous of both Sexes. Yet this I may say, that whatever Vices are found amongst us, have in general both their source, and encouragement from them.

The Question I shall at present handle is, whether the time an ingenious Gentleman spends in the Company of Women, may justly be said to be misemploy'd, or not? I put the question in general terms; because whoever holds the affirmative must maintain it so, or the Sex

is

is no way concern'd to oppoſe him. On the other ſide I ſhall not maintain the Negative, but with ſome Reſtrictions and Limitations; becauſe I will not be bound to juſtifie thoſe Women, whoſe Vices and ill Conduct expoſe them deſervedly to the Cenſure of the other Sex, as well as of their own. The Queſtion being thus ſtated, let us conſider the end and purpoſes, for which Converſation was at firſt inſtituted, and is yet deſirable; and then we ſhall ſee, whether they may not all be found in the Company of Women. Theſe Ends, I take it, are the ſame with thoſe we aim at in all our other Actions, in general only two, Profit or Pleaſure. Theſe are divided into thoſe of the Mind, and thoſe of the Body. Of the latter I ſhall take no further Notice, as having no Relation to the preſent Subject; but ſhall confine my ſelf wholly to the Mind, the Profit of which is the Improvement of the Underſtanding, and the Pleaſure is the Diverſion, and Relaxation of its Cares and Paſſions.

Now if either of these Ends be attainable by the Society of Women, I have gain'd my Point. However, I hope to make it appear, that they are not only both to be met with in the Conversation of Women, but one of them more generally, and in greater measure than in Mens.

Our Company is generally by our Adversaries represented as unprofitable and irksome to Men of Sense, and by some of the more vehement Sticklers against us, as Criminal. These Imputations as they ars unjust, especially the latter, so they savour strongly of the Malice, Arrogance and Sottishness of those, that most frequently urge 'em; who are commonly either conceited Fops, whose success in their Pretences to the favour of our Sex has been no greater than their Merit, and fallen very far short of their Vanity and Presumption, or a sort of morose, ill-bred, unthinking Fellows, who appear to be Men only by their Habit and Beards, and are scarce distinguishable from Brutes

Brutes but by their Figure and Risibility. But I ſhall wave theſe Reflections at preſent, however juſt, and come cloſer to our Argument. If Women are not quallified for the Converſation of ingenious Men, or, to get yet further, their friendſhip, it muſt be becauſe they want ſome one condition, or more, neceſſarily requiſite to either. The neceſſary Conditions of theſe are Senſe, and good nature, to which muſt be added, for Friendſhip, Fidelity and Integrity. Now if any of theſe be wanting to our Sex, it muſt be either becauſe Nature has not been ſo liberal as to beſtow 'em upon us; or becauſe due care has not been taken to cultivate thoſe Gifts to a competent meaſure in us.

The firſt of theſe Cauſes is that, which is moſt generally urg'd againſt us, whether it be in Raillery, or Spight. I might eaſily cut this part of the Controverſy ſhort by an irrefragable Argument, which is, that the expreſs intent, and reaſon for which Women was created,

was

was to be a Companion, and help
meet to Man; and that consequent-
ly those, that deny 'em to be so,
must argue a Mistake in Provi-
dence, and think themselves wiser
than their Creator. But these Gen-
tlemen are generally such passionate
Admirers of themselves, and have
such a profound value and reve-
rence for their own Parts, that they
are ready at any time to sacrifice
their Religion to the Reputation of
their Wit, and rather than lose
their point, deny the truth of the
History. There are others, that
though they allow the Story yet
affirm, that the propagation, and
continuance of Mankind, was the
only Reason for which we were
made; as if the Wisdom that first
made Man, cou'd not without trou-
ble have continu'd that Species by
the same or any other Method, had
not this been most conducive to his
happiness, which was the gracious
and only end of his Creation. But
these superficial Gentleman wear
their Understandings like their
Clothes, always set and formal
an

and wou'd no more Talk than Dreſs out of Faſhion; Beau's that, rather than any part of their outward Figure ſhou'd be damag'd, wou'd wipe the dirt off their ſhoes with their Handkercher, and that value themſelves infinitely more upon modiſh Nonſenſe, than upon the beſt Senſe-againſt the Faſhion. But ſince I do not intent to make this a religious Argument, I ſhall leave all further Conſiderations of this Nature to the Divines, whoſe more immediate Buſineſs and Study it is, to aſſert the Wiſdom of Providence in the Order, and diſtribution of this World, againſt all that ſhall oppoſe it.

No diſtinction of Sexes in Souls.

To proceed therefore if we be naturally defective, the Defect muſt be either in Soul or Body. In the Soul it can't be, if what I have hear'd ſome learned Men maintain, be true, that all Souls are equal, and alike, and that conſequently there is no ſuch diſtinction, as Male and Female Souls; that there are no innate *Idea's*, but that all the Notions

Notions we have, are deriv'd from our External Senſes, either immediately, or by Reflection. Theſe Metaphyſical Speculations, I muſt own, Madam, require much more Learning and a ſtronger Head, than I can pretend to be Miſtreſs of, to be conſider'd as they ought; Yet ſo bold I may be, as to undertake the defence of theſe Opinions, when any of our jingling Opponents think fit to refute 'em.

No advantage in the Organization of their Bodies.

Neither can it be in the Body, (if I may credit the Report of learned Phyſicians) for there is no difference in the Organization of thoſe Parts, which have any relation to, or influence over the Minds; but the Brain, and all other Parts (which I am not Anatomiſt enough to name) are contriv'd as well for the plentiful conveyance of Spirits, which are held to be the immediate Inſtruments of Senſation, in Women, as Men. I ſee therefore no natural Impediment in the ſtructure of our Bodies; nor does Experience, or Obſervation argue any: We uſe all our

our Natural Faculties, as well as Men, nay, and our Rational too, deducting only for the advantages before mention'd.

Confirm'd from Experience of Brutes.

Let us appeal yet further to Experience, and obſerve thoſe Creatures that deviate leaſt from ſimple Nature, and ſee if we can find any difference in Senſe, or underſtanding between Males and Females. In theſe we may ſee Nature plaineſt, who lie under no conſtraint of Cuſtom or Laws, but thoſe of Paſſion or Appetite, which are Natures, and know no difference of Education, nor receive any Byaſs by prejudice. We ſee great diſtance in Degrees of Underſtanding, Wit, Cunning and Docility (call them what you pleaſe) between the ſeveral Species of Brutes. An Ape, a Dog, a Fox, are by daily Obſervation found to be more Docile, and more Subtle than an Ox, a Swine, or a Sheep. But a She Ape is as full of, and as ready at Imitation as a He; a Bitch will learn as many Tricks

Tricks in as ſhort a time as a Dog a Female Fox has as many Wile as a Male. A thouſand inſtances o this kind might be produc'd; but think theſe are ſo plain, that t inſtance more were a ſuperfluous la bour; I ſhall only once more take notice, that in Brutes and other A nimals there is no difference be twixt Male and Female in point o Sagacity, notwithſtanding there i the ſame diſtinction of Sexes, tha is between Men and Women. I have read, that ſome Philoſopher have held Brutes to be no more than meer Machines, a ſort of Di vine Clock-work, that Act only by the force of nice unſeen Springs without Senſation, and cry out without feeling Pain, Eat without Hunger, Drink without Thirſt, fawn upon their Keepers without ſeeing 'em, hunt Hares without Smelling, &c. Here Madam is co ver for our Antagoniſts againſt the laſt Argument ſo thick, that there is no beating 'em out. For my part, I ſhall not envy 'em their re fuge, let 'em lie like the wild *Iriſh*

ſecure

ſecure within their Boggs; the field is at leaſt ours, ſo long as they keep to their Faſtneſſes. But to quit this Topick, I ſhall only add, that if the learnedeſt He of 'em all can convince me of the truth of this Opinion, He will very much ſtagger my Faith; for hitherto I have been able to obſerve no difference between our Knowledge and theirs, but a gradual one; and depend upon Revelation alone, that our Souls are Immortal, and theirs not.

Experience of Mankind.

But if an Argument from Brutes and other Animals ſhall not be allow'd as concluſive, (though I can't ſee, why ſuch an Inference ſhould not be valid, ſince the parity of Reaſon is the ſame on both ſides in this Caſe.) I ſhall deſire thoſe, that hold againſt us to obſerve the Country People, I mean the inferiour ſort of them, ſuch as not having Stocks to follow Husbandry upon their own Score, ſubſiſt upon their daily Labour. For amongſt theſe, though not ſo equal as

as that of Brutes, yet the Condi-
tion of the two Sexes is more le-
vel, than amonſt Gentlemen, Ci-
ty Traders, or rich Yeomen. Ex-
amine them in their ſeveral Buſi-
neſſes, and their Capacities will ap-
pear equal; but talk to them o
things indifferent, and out of th
Road of their conſtant Employment,
and the Ballance will fall on our
ſide, the Women will be found the
more ready and polite. Let us
look a little further, and view our
Sex in a ſtate of more improve-
ment, amongſt our Neighbours the
Dutch. There we ſhall find them
managing not only the Domeſtick
Affairs of the Family, but making,
and receiving all Payments as well
great as ſmall, keeping the Books,
ballancing the Accounts, and do-
ing all the Buſineſs, even the niceſt
of Merchants, with as much Dexte-
rity and Exactneſs as their, or our
Men can do. And I have often
hear'd ſome of our conſiderable
Merchants blame the conduct of our
Country-Men in this point; that
they breed our Women ſo igno-
rant

rant of Buſineſs; whereas were they taught Arithmetick, and other Arts which require not much bodily ſtrength, they might ſupply the places of abundance of luſty Men now employ'd in ſedentary Buſineſs; which would be a mighty profit to the Nation by ſending thoſe Men to Employments, where hands and Strength are more requir'd, eſpecially at this time when we are in ſuch want of People. Beſide that it might prevent the ruine of many Families, which is often occaſion'd by the Death of Merchants in full Buſineſs, and leaving their Accounts perplex'd, and embroil'd to a Widdow and Orphans, who underſtanding nothing of the Husband or Father's Buſineſs, occaſions the Rending, and oftentimes the utter Confounding a fair Eſtate; which might be prevented, did the Wife but underſtand Merchants Accounts, and were made acquainted with the Books.

I have yet another Argument from Nature, which is, that the very Make and Temper of our Bodies ſhew that we were never deſign'd for Fatigue; and the Vivacity of our Wits, and Readineſs of our Invention (which are confeſs'd even by our Adverſaries) demonſtrate that we were chiefly intended for Thought, and the Exerciſe of the Mind. Whereas on the contrary it is apparent from the ſtrength and ſize of their Limbs, the Vigour and Hardineſs of their Conſtitutions, that Men were purpoſely fram'd and contriv'd for Action and Labour. And herein the Wiſdom and Contrivance of Providence is abundantly manifeſted; for, as the one Sex is fortified with Courage and Ability to undergo the neceſſary Drudgery of providing Materials for the ſuſtenance of Life in both; ſo the other is furniſh'd with Ingenuity and Prudence for the orderly management and diſtribution of it, for the Relief and Comfort of a Family; and is over and above enrich'd with a peculiar Ten-

Tenderneſs and Care requiſite to the Cheriſhing their poor helpleſs Off-ſpring. I know our Oppoſers uſually miſcall our quickneſs of Thought, Fancy and Flaſh, and chriſten their own heavineſs by the ſpecious Names of Judgment and Solidity; but it is eaſie to retort upon 'em the reproachful Ones of Dullneſs and Stupidity with more Juſtice. I ſhall purſue this Point no further, but continue firm in my Perſuaſion, that Nature has not been ſo Niggardly to us, as our Adverſaries would inſinuate, till I ſee better cauſe to the contrary, then I have hitherto at any time done. Yet I am ready to yield to Conviction, whoever offers it; which I don't ſuddenly expect.

It remains then for us to enquire, whether the Bounty of Nature be wholly neglected, or ſtifled by us, or ſo far as to make us unworthy the Company of Men? Or whether our Education (as bad as it is) be not ſufficient to make us a uſe-

ful, nay, a neceſſary part of Society for the greateſt part of Mankind. This cauſe is ſeldom indeed urg'd againſt us by the Men, though it be the only one, that gives 'em any advantage over us in underſtanding. But it does not ſerve their Pride, there is no Honour to be gain'd by it: For a Man ought no more to value himſelf upon being Wiſer than a Woman, if he owe his Advantage to a better Education, and greater means of Information, then he ought to boaſt of his Courage, for beating a Man, when his Hands were bound. Nay, it would be ſo far from Honourable to contend for preference upon this Score, that they would thereby at once argue themſelves guilty both of Tyranny, and of Fear: I think I need not have mention'd the latter; for none can be Tyrants but Cowards. For nothing makes one Party ſlaviſhly depreſs another, but their fear that they may at one time or other become Strong or Couragious enough to make themſelves equal to, if not ſuperiour to their

Women induſtriouſly kept in ignorance.

their Maſters. This is our Caſe; for Men being ſenſible as well of the Abilities of Mind in our Sex, as of the ſtrength of Body in their own, began to grow Jealous, that we, who in the Infancy of the World were their Equals and Partners in Dominion, might in proceſs of Time, by Subtlety and Stratagem, become their Superiours; and therefore began in good time to make uſe of Force (the Origine of Power) to compel us to a Subjection, Nature never meant; and made uſe of Natures liberality to them to take the benefit of her kindneſs from us. From that time they have endeavour'd to train us up altogether to Eaſe and Ignorance; as Conquerors uſe to do to thoſe, they reduce by Force, that ſo they may diſarm 'em, both of Courage and Wit; and conſequently make them tamely give up their Liberty, and abjectly ſubmit their Necks to a ſlaviſh Yoke. As the World grew more Populous, and Mens Neceſſities whetted their Inventions, ſo it increas'd their Jea-

Jouſy, and ſharpen'd their Tyranny over us, till by degrees, it came to that height of Severity, I may ſay Cruelty, it is now at in all the Eaſtern parts of the World, where the Women, like our Negroes in our Weſtern Plantations, are born ſlaves, and live Priſoners all their Lives. Nay, ſo far has this barbarous Humour prevail'd, and ſpread it ſelf, that in ſome parts of *Europe*, which pretend to be moſt refin'd and civiliz'd, in ſpite of Chriſtianity, and the Zeal for Religion which they ſo much affect, our Condition is not very much better. And even in *France*, a Country that treats our Sex with more Reſpect than moſt do, We are by the *Salique Law* excluded from Soveraign Power. The *French* are an ingenious People, and the Contrivers of that Law knew well enough, that We were no leſs capable of Reigning, and Governing well, than themſelves; but they were ſuſpicious, that if the Regal Power ſhou'd fall often into the hands of Women, they would favour their own Sex, and might in time

Original of the Salique Law.

time reſtore 'em to their Primitive Liberty and Equality with the Men, and ſo break the neck of that unreaſonable Authority they ſo much affect over us; and therefore made this Law to prevent it. The Hiſtorians indeed tell us other Reaſons, but they can't agree among themſelves, and as Men are Parties againſt us, and therefore their Evidence may juſtly be rejected. To ſay the truth Madam, I can't tell how to prove all this from Ancient Records; for if any Hiſtories were anciently written by Women, Time, and the Malice of Men have effectually conſpir'd to ſuppreſs 'em; and it is not reaſonable to think that Men ſhou'd tranſmit, or ſuffer to be tranſmitted to Poſterity, any thing that might ſhew the weakneſs and illegallity of their Title to a Power they ſtill exerciſe ſo arbitrarily, and are ſo fond of. But ſince daily Experience ſhews, and their own Hiſtories tell us, how earneſtly they endeavour, and what they act, and ſuffer to put the ſame Trick upon one another, 'tis natu-

ral to ſuppoſe they took the ſame meaſures with us at firſt, which now they have effected, like the Rebels in our laſt Civil Wars, when they had brought the Royal Party under, they fall together by the Ears about the Dividend. The Sacred Hiſtory takes no notice of any ſuch Authority they had before the Flood, and their Own confeſs that whole Nations have rejected it ſince, and not ſuffer'd a Man to live amongſt them, which cou'd be for no other Reaſon, than their Tyranny. For upon leſs provocation the Women wou'd never have been ſo fooliſh, as to deprive themſelves of the benefit of that Eaſe and Security, which a good agreement with their Men might have afforded 'em. 'Tis true the ſame Hiſtories tell us, that there were whole Countries where were none but Men, which border'd upon 'em. But this makes ſtill for us; for it ſhews that the Conditions of their Society were nor ſo eaſie, as to engage their Women to ſtay amongſt 'em; but as liberty preſented it ſelf, they withdrew

Amazons, why they rejected the Society of Man.

drew and retired to the *Amazons*: But ſince our Sex can hardly boaſt of ſo great Privileges, and ſo eaſie a Servitude any where as in *England*, I cut this ungrateful Digreſſion ſhort in acknowledgment; tho' Fetters of Gold are ſtill Fetters, and the ſofteſt Lining can never make 'em ſo eaſy, as Liberty.

You will excuſe, I know Madam, this ſhort, but neceſſary Digreſſion. I call it neceſſary, becauſe it ſhews a probable Reaſon, why We are at this time in ſuch ſubjection to them, without leſſening the Opinion of our Senſe, or Natural Capacities, either at preſent, or for the time paſt; beſide that it briefly lays open without any Scandal to our Sex, why our Improvements are at preſent ſo diſproportion'd to thoſe of Men. I wou'd not have any of our little, unthinking Adverſaries triumph at my allowing a diſproportion between the Improvements of our Sex and theirs; and I am ſure thoſe of 'em that are ingenious Men, will ſee no reaſon for it from what I have ſaid. After

After having granted so great a disparity as I have already done in the customary Education, and advantagious Liberties of the Sexes, 'twere Nonsense to maintain, that our Society is generally and upon all accounts as Beneficial, Improving and Entertaining, as that of Men. He must be a very shallow Fellow, that resorts to, and frequents us in hopes by our means to make himself considerable, as a Schollar, a Mathematician, a Philosopher, or a States-man. These Arts and Sciences are the result only of much Study and great Experience; and without one at least of 'em are no more to be acquir'd by the Company of Men, however celebrated for any or all of them, than by ours. But there are other Quallifications, which are as indispensably necessary to a Gentleman, or any Man that wou'd appear to Advantage in the World, which are attainable only by Company, and Conversation, and chiefly by ours. Nor can the greatest part of Mankind, of what Quallity soever, boast

boaſt much of the uſe they make, or the benefit they reap from theſe acknowledg'd Advantages. So that Schollars only, and ſome few of the more thinking Gentlemen, and Men of Buſineſs, have any juſt claim to 'em. And of theſe the firſt generally fall ſhort enough ſome other way to make the Ballance even. For Schollars, though by their acquaintance with Books, and converſing much with Old Authors, they may know perfectly the Senſe of the Learned Dead, and be perfect Maſters of the Wiſdom, be throughly inform'd of the State, and nicely skill'd in the Policies of Ages long ſince paſt, yet by their retir'd and unactive Life, their neglect of Buſineſs, and conſtant Converſation with Antiquity, they are ſuch Strangers to, and ſo ignorant of the Domeſtick Affairs and manners of their own Country and Times, that they appear like the Ghoſts of Old Romans rais'd by Magick. Talk to them of the *Aſſyrian*, or *Perſian* Monarchies, the *Grecians* or *Roman* Com-

Character of a Pedant.

Common-wealths. They anſwer like Oracles, they are ſuch finiſh'd Statemen, that we ſhou'd ſcarce take 'em to have been leſs then Confidents of *Semiramis*, Tutours to *Cyrus* the Great, old Cronies of *Solin* and *Lycurgus*, or Privy Councellours at leaſt to the Twelve *Cæſars* ſucceſſively; but engage them in a Diſcourſe that concerns the preſent Times, and their Native Country, and they hardly ſpeak the Language of it, and know ſo little of the affairs of it, that as much might reaſonably be expected from an animated *Egyptian* Mummy. They are very much diſturbed to ſee a Fold or a Plait amiſs in the Picture of an Old *Roman* Gown, yet take no notice that their own are thredbare out at the Elbows, or Ragged, and ſuffer more if *Priſcian's* Head be broken than if it were their own. They are excellent Guides, and can direct you to every Ally, and turning in old *Rome*; yet loſe their way at home in their own Pariſh. They are mighty admirers of the Wit and Eloquence of

the

the Ancients; yet had they liv'd in the time of *Cicero*, and *Cæſar* wou'd have treated them with as much ſupercilious Pride, and diſreſpect as they do now with Reverence. They are great hunters of ancient Manuſcripts, and have in great Veneration any thing, that has ſcap'd the Teeth of Time and Rats, and if Age have obliterated the Characters, 'tis the more valuable for not being legible. But if by chance they can pick out one Word, they rate it higher than the whole Author in Print, and wou'd give more for one Proverb of *Solomons* under his own Hand, than for all his Wiſdom. Theſe Superſtitious, bigotted Idolaters of time paſt, are Children in their underſtanding all their lives; for they hang ſo inceſſantly upon the leading Strings of Authority, that their Judgments like the Limbs of ſome *Indian* Penitents, become altogether crampt and motionleſs for want of uſe.

But

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But as theſe Men, will hardly be reckon'd much ſuperiour to us upon the account of their Learning or Improvements, ſo neither will I ſuppoſe another ſort diametrically oppoſite to theſe in their Humors and Opinions: I mean thoſe whoſe Anceſtors have been wiſe and provident, and rais'd Eſtates by their Ingenuity and Induſtry, and given all their Poſterity after 'em Means, and Leiſure to be Fools. Theſe are generally ſent to School in their Minority, and were they kept there till they came to Years of Diſcretion, might moſt of 'em ſtay, till they cou'd tuck their Beards into their Girdles before they left carrying a Satchel. In conformity to Cuſtom, and the Faſhion, they are ſent early to ſerve an Apprenticeſhip to Letters, and for eight or nine years are whipt up and down through two or three Counties from School to School; when being arriv'd at Sixteen, or Seventeen Years of Age, and having made the uſual *Tour* of Latin, and Greek Authors, they are call'd Home to be made Gentlemen.

Character of a Country Squire.

men. As ſoon as the young Squire has got out of the Houſe of Bondage, ſhaken off the awe of Birch, and begins to feel himſelf at Liberty, he conſiders that he is now Learned enough, (and 'tis ten to one but his Friends are wiſe enough to be of his Opinion) and thinks it high time to ſhake off the barbarous Acquaintance he contracted, with thoſe crabbed, vexatious, obſcure Fellows, that gave him ſo much trouble and ſmart at School, Companions by no means fit for a Gentleman, that writ only to torment and perplex poor Boys, and exerciſe the tyranny of Pedants and School-maſters. Theſe prudent reſolutions taken, his Converſation for ſome years ſucceeding is wholly taken up by his Horſes, Dogs and Hawks (eſpecially if his Reſidence be in the Country) and the more ſenſleſs Animals that tend 'em. His Groom, his Huntſman, and his Falconer are his Tutors, and his walk is from the Stable to the Dog-kennel, and the reverſe of it. His diverſion is drudgery, and he is

higheſt ſatisfaction when he is moſt tir'd. He wearies you in the Morning with his Sport, in the Afternoon with the noiſie Repetion and Drink, and the whole Day with Fatigue and Confuſion. His Entertainment is ſtale Beer, and the Hiſtory of his Dogs and Horſes, in which he gives you the Pedigree of every one with all the exactneſs of a Herald; and if you be very much in his good Graces, 'tis odds, but he makes you the Compliment of a Puppy of one of his favourite Bitches, which you muſt take with abundance of Acknowledgments of his Civillity, or elſe he takes you for a ſtupid as well as an ill bred Fellow. He is very conſtant at all Clubs and Meetings of the Country Gentlemen, where he will ſuffer nothing to be talk'd or hear'd of but his Jades, his Curs, and his Kites. Upon theſe he rings perpetual Changes, and treſpaſſes as much upon the patience of the Company in the Tavern, as upon their Encloſures in the Field, and is leaſt impertinent, when moſt drunk.

His

His grand Buſineſs is to make an Aſſignation for a Horſe Race, or a Hunting Match, and nothing diſcompoſes him ſo much as a Diſappointment. Thus accompliſh'd, and finiſh'd for a Gentleman, he enters the Civil Liſts, and holds the Scale of Juſtice with as much Blindneſs as ſhe is ſaid to do. From hence forward his Worſhip becomes as formidable to the Ale-Houſes, as he was before Familiar; he ſizes an Ale Pot, and takes the dimenſions of Bread with great Dexterity and Sagacity. He is the terrour of all the Deer and Poultry Stealers in the Neighbourhood, and is ſo implacable a Perſecutor of Poachers, that he keeps a Regiſter of all the Dogs and Guns in the Hundred, and is the Scare-Beggar of the Pariſh. Short Pots, and unjuſtifiable Dogs and Nets, furniſh him with ſufficient matter of Preſentments, to carry him once a Quarter to the Seſſions; where he ſays little, Eats and Drinks much, and after Dinner, Hunts over the laſt Chace, and ſo rides Worſhip-

fully Drunk home again. At home he Exerciſes his Authority in granting his Letters Pattents to Petitioners for erecting Shovel Board Tables, and Ginger Bread Stalls. If he happen to live near any little Boroùgh, or Corporation, that ſends Burgeſſes to Parliament, he may become ambitious and ſue for the Honour of being made their Repreſentative. Henceforward he grows Popular, bows to, and treats the Mob all round him; and whether there be any in his Diſcourſe or not, there is good Senſe, in his Kitchin and his Cellar, which is more agreeable and edifying. If he be ſo happy as to out-tap his Competitour, and Drink his Neighbours in an Opinion of his Sobriety, he is choſen, and up he comes to that Honourable Aſſembly, where he ſhews his Wiſdom beſt by his Silence, and ſerves his Country moſt in his abſence.

I give you theſe two Characters, *Madam*, as irreconcileable as Water and Oyl, to ſhew that Men may

may, and do often Baffle and Fruſtrate the Effects of a liberal Education, as well by Induſtry as Negligence. 'Tis hard to ſay, which of theſe two is the more Sottiſh; the firſt is ſuch an Admirer of Letters, that he thinks it a diſparagement to his Learning to talk what other Men underſtand, and will ſcarce believe that two, and two, make four, under a Demonſtration from *Euclid*, or a Quotation of *Ariſtotle*: The latter has ſuch a fear of Pedantry always before his Eyes, that he thinks it a Scandal to his good Breeding and Gentility to talk Senſe, or write true *Engliſh*; and has ſuch a contemptible Notion of his paſt Education, that he thinks the *Roman* Poets good for nothing but to teach Boys to cap Verſes. For my part I think the Learned, and Unlearned Blockhead pretty equal; for 'tis all one to me, whether a Man talk Nonſenſe, or unintelligable Senſe, I am diverted and edified alike by either; the one enjoys himſelf leſs, but ſuffers his Friends to do it more; the

other enjoys himſelf and his own Humour enough, but will let no body elſe do it in his Company. Thus, *Madam*, I have ſet them before you, and ſhall leave you to determine a Point, which I cannot.

The Education of the Female Sex not ſo deficient as commonly thought

There are others that deſerve to be brought into the Company of theſe upon like Honourable Reaſons; but I keep them in reſerve for a proper place, where I may perhaps take the pains to draw their Pictures to the Life at full length. Let us now return to our Argument, from which we have had a long breathing while. Let us look into the manner of our Education, and ſee wherein it falls ſhort of the Mens, and how the defects of it may be, and are generally ſupply'd. In our tender years they are the ſame, for after Children can Talk, they are promiſcuouſly taught to Read and Write by the ſame Perſons, and at the ſame time both Boys and Girls. When theſe are acquir'd, which is generally

ly about the Age of Six or Seven Years, they begin to be ſeparated, and the Boys are ſent to the *Grammer-School*, and the Girls to *Boarding Schools*, or other places, to learn Needle Work, Dancing, Singing, Muſick, Drawing, Painting, and other Accompliſhments, according to the Humour and Ability of the Parents, or Inclination of the Children. Of all theſe, Reading, and Writing are the main Inſtruments of Converſation; though Muſick and Painting may be allow'd to contribute ſomething towards it, as they give us an inſight into two Arts, that makes up a great part of the Pleaſures and Diverſions of Mankind. Here then lies the main Defect, that we are taught only our Mother Tongue, or perhaps *French*, which is now very faſhionable, and almoſt as Familiar amongſt Women of Quality as Men; whereas the other Sex by means of a more extenſive Education to the knowledge of the *Roman* and *Greek* Languages, have a vaſter Feild for their Imaginations to rove in, and

their Capacities thereby enlarg'd. To ſee whether this be ſtrictly true or not, I mean in what relates to our debate, I will for once ſuppoſe, that we are inſtructed only in our own Tongue, and then enquire whether the Diſadvantage be ſo great as it is commonly imagin'd. You know very well, *Madam*, that for Converſation, it is not requiſite we ſhould be Philologers, Rhetoricians, Philoſophers, Hiſtorians, or Poets; but only that we ſhould think pertinently, and expreſs our thoughts properly, on ſuch matters as are the proper Subjects for a mixt Converſation. The *Italians*, a People as delicate in their Converſation as any in the World, have a Maxim, That our ſelves, our Neighbours, Religion, or Buſineſs, ought never to be the Subject. There are very ſubſtantial Reaſons to be given for theſe Reſtrictions, for Men are very apt to be vain, and impertinent, when they talk of themſelves, beſides that others are very jealous, and apt to ſuſpect, that all the good things ſaid, are

Religion, &c. no proper ſubject for mixt Converſation.

in-

intended as ſo many arguments of preference to them. When they ſpeak of their Neighbours, they are apt out of a Principle of Emulation and Envy, natural to all the race of *Adam*, to leſſen, and tarniſh their Fame, whether by open Scandal, and Defamatory Stories, and Tales, or by malicious Inſinuations, invidious Circumſtances, ſiniſter and covert Reflections. This humour ſprings from an over fondneſs of our ſelves, and a miſtaken conceit that anothers loſs is an addition to our own Reputation, as if like two Buckets, one muſt neceſſarily riſe as the other goes down. This is the baſeſt and moſt ungenerous of all our natural Failures, and ought to be corrected as much as poſſible e'ry where; but more eſpecially in *Italy*, where Reſentments are carried ſo high, and Revenges proſecuted with ſo much Heat and Animoſity. Religion is likewiſe very tender there, as in all other places, where the Prieſts have ſo much Power and Authority. But even here, where our differences

and diſputes have made it more tame, and us'd it to rough handling, it ought carefully to be avoided; for nothing raiſes unfriendly warmths among Company more than a religious Argument, which therefore ought to be baniſht all Society intended only for *Converſation* and *Diverſion*. Buſineſs is too dry and barren to give any Spirit to *Converſation*, or *Pleaſure* to a *Company*, and is therefore rather to be reckon'd among the Encumbrances than Comforts of Life, however neceſſary. Beſides theſe, Points of Learning, abſtruſe Speculations, and nice Politicks, ought, in my opinion, to be excluded; becauſe being things that require much Reading and Conſideration, they are not fit to be canvas'd *ex tempore* in mixt Company, of which 'tis probable the greateſt part will have little to ſay to 'em, and will ſcarce be content to be ſilent Hearers only; beſides that they are not in their nature gay enough to awaken the good Humour, or raiſe the Mirth of the Company. Nor need any one to fear, that by theſe limi-

limitations Converſation ſhou'd be reſtrain'd to too narrow a compaſs, there are ſubjects enough that are in themſelves neither inſipid, nor offenſive? ſuch as Love, Honour, Gallantry, Morality, News, Raillery, and a numberleſs train of other Things copious and diverting. Now I can't ſee the neceſſity of any other Tongue beſide our own, to enable us to talk plauſibly, or judiciouſly, upon any of theſe Topicks: Nay, I am very confident, that 'tis poſſible for an ingenious Perſon to make a very conſiderable progreſs in moſt parts of learning, by the help of *Engliſh* only. For the only reaſon I can conceive of learning Languages, is to arrive at the Senſe, Wit, or Arts, that have been communicated to the World in 'em. Now of thoſe that have taken the pains to make themſelves Maſters of thoſe Treaſures, many have been ſo generous as to impart a ſhare of 'em to the Publick, by Tranſlations for the uſe of the Unlearned; and I flatter my ſelf ſometimes, that ſeveral of theſe were more particularly undertaken

Great Improvements to be made by the help of Engliſh *only.*

deritaken by Ingenious, good Natur'd Men in Kindneſs and Compaſſion to our Sex. But whatever the Motives were, the obliging Humour has ſo far prevail'd, that ſcarce any thing either Ancient, or Modern, that might be of general uſe, either for Pleaſure, or Inſtruction, is left untouch'd, and moſt of them are made entirely free of our Tongue. I am no Judge either of the Accuracy, or Elegance of ſuch Performances; but if I may credit the report of Learned and Ingenious Gentlemen, (whoſe Judgment or Sincerity I have no reaſon to queſtion) many of thoſe excellent Authors have loſt nothing by the change of Soil. I can ſee and admire the Wit and Fancy of *Ovid* in the Tranſlation of his Epiſtles, and Elegies, the ſoftneſs and Paſſion of *Tibullus*, the Impetuoſity and Fire of *Juvenal*, the Gayety, Spirit and Judgment of *Horace*; who, tho' he may appear very different from himſelf through the diverſity, and inequality of the Hands concern'd in making him

ſpeak

ſpeak *Engliſh*, yet may eaſily be gueſs'd at from the ſeveral excellent Pieces render'd by the Earl of *Roſcommon*, Mr. *Cowley*, Mr. *Dryden*, Mr. *Congreve*, Mr. *Brown*, and other ingenious Gentlemen, who have oblig'd the Nation with their excellent Verſions of ſome parts of him. Nor is it poſſible to be inſenſible of the ſweetneſs and Majeſty of *Virgil*, after having read thoſe little, but Divine Samples, already made publick in *Engliſh* by Mr. *Dryden*, which gives us ſo much Impatience to ſee the whole Work entire by that admirable Hand. I have heard ſome ingenious Gentlemen ſay, That it was impoſſible to do Juſtice in our Tongue to theſe two laſt Celebrated *Roman* Poets, and I have known others, of whoſe Judgments I have as high an Opinion, affirm the contrary; my ignorance of Latin diſables me from determining whether we are in the right, but the Beauty of what I have already ſeen by the means of thoſe Gentlemen, has ſo far prejudic'd,

dic'd me in favour of the latter; that might I have 'em entire from the ſame hands, I think I ſhou'd ſcarce envy thoſe, who can taſt the pleaſure of the Originals. Nor is it to the Poets only, that we ſtand indebted for the Treaſures of Antiquity, We have no leſs Engagements to thoſe, who have ſucceſsfully labour'd in Proſe, and have made us familiar with *Plutarch*, *Seneca*, *Cicero*, and in general with all the famous Philoſophers, Orators and Hiſtorians, from whom we may at once learn both the Opinions and Practices of their Times. Aſſiſted by theſe helps, 'tis impoſſible for any Woman to be ignorant that is but deſirous to be otherwiſe, though ſhe know no part of Speech out of her Mother Tongue. But theſe are neither the only, nor the greateſt Advantages we have; all that is excellent in *France*, *Italy*, or any of our neighbouring Nations is now become our own; to one of whom, I may be bold to ſay, we are beholding for more, and greater Improvements of Converſation, than to all

Anti-

Antiquity and the learned Languages together. Nor can I imagine for what good Reaſon a Man skill'd in Latin, and Greek, and vers'd in the Authors of Ancient Times ſhall be call'd Learned; yet another who perfectly underſtands *Italian*, *French*, *Spaniſh*, *High Dutch*, and the reſt of the *European* Languages, is acquainted with the Modern Hiſtory of all thoſe Countries, knows their Policies, has div'd into all the Intrigues of the ſeveral Courts, and can tell their mutual Diſpoſitions, Obligations, and Ties of Intereſt one to another, ſhall after all this be thought Unlearned for want of thoſe two Languages. Nay, though he be never ſo well vers'd in the Modern Philoſophy, Aſtronomy, Geometry and Algebra, he ſhall notwithſtanding never be allow'd that honourable Title. I can ſee but one apparent Reaſon for this unfair procedure; which is, that when about an Age and an half ago, all the poor Remains of Learning then in Being, were in the hands of the Schoolmen;

The name of Learning unjuſtly reſtrained to the knowledge of Latin and Greek only.

men; they wou'd ſuffer none to paſs Muſter, that were not deeply engag'd in thoſe intricate, vexatious and unintelligible Trifles, for which themſelves contended with ſo much Noiſe and Heat; or at leaſt were not acquainted with *Plato* and *Ariſtotle*, and their Commentators; from whence the Sophiſtry and Subtleties of the Schools at that time were drawn. This Uſurpation was maintain'd by their Succeſſors, the Divines, who to this day pretend almoſt to the Monopoly of Learning; and though ſome generous Spirits have in good meaſure broke the neck of this Arbitrary, Tyrannical Authority; yet can't they prevail to extend the name of Learning beyond the Studies, in which the Divines are more particularly converſant. Thus you ſhall have 'em allow a Man to be a wiſe Man, a good Naturaliſt, a good Mathematician, Politician, or Poet, but not a Scholar, a learned Man, that is no Philologer. For my part I think theſe Gentlemen have juſt inverted the uſe of the Term, and given

ven that to the knowledge of words, which belongs more properly to Things. I take Nature to be the great Book of Universal Learning, which he that reads best in all, or any of its Parts, is the greatest Scholar, the most learned Man; and 'tis as ridiculous for a Man to count himself more learned than another, if he have no greater extent of knowledge of things, because he is more vers'd in Languages; as it would be for an Old Fellow to tell a Young One, his own Eyes were better than the other's because he Reads with Spectacles, the other without.

English Books the best helps to Conversation.

Thus, *Madam*, you see we may come in Time to put in for Learning, if we have a mind, without falling under the Correction of Pedants. But I will let Learning alone at present, because I have already banish'd it (though not out of disrespect) from mix'd Conversation; to which we will return, and of which the greatest Magazines and Supports are still in

in Reserve. I mean the many excellent Authors of our own Country, whose Works it were endless to recount. Where is Love, Honour and Bravery more lively represented than in our Tragedies, who has given us Nobler, or juster Pictures of Nature than Mr. *Shakespear*? Where is there a tenderer Passion, than in the Maids Tragedy? Whose Grief is more awful and commanding than Mr. *Otways*? Whose Descriptions more Beautifull, or Thoughts more Gallant than Mr. *Drydens*? When I see any of their Plays acted, my Passions move by their Direction, my Indignation, my Compassion, my Grief are all at their Beck. Nor is our Comedy at all inferiour to our Tragedy; for, not to mention those already nam'd for the other part of the Stage, who are all excellent in this too, Sir *George Etherege* and Sir *Charles Sedley* for neat Raillery and Gallantry are without Rivals, Mr. *Wicherley* for strong Wit, pointed Satyr, sound and useful Observations is beyond

Imi-

Imitation; Mr. *Congreve* for ſprightly, gentile, eaſie Wit falls ſhort of no Man. Theſe are the Maſters of the Stage; but there are others who though of an inferiour Claſs, yet deſerve Commendation, were that at preſent my Buſineſs. Nay, even the worſt of 'em afford us ſome diverſion; for I find a ſort of fooliſh Pleaſure, and can laugh at Mr. *D*——*y*'s Farce, as I do at the Tricks, and Impertinencies of a Monkey; and was pleaſed to ſee the humour and delight of the Author in Mr. *H*——*n*'s Eating, and Drinking Play which I fancy'd was written in a Victualling Houſe. In ſhort, were it not for the too great frequency of looſe Expreſſions, and wanton Images, I ſhould take our Theaters for the beſt Schools in the World of Wit, Humanity, and Manners; which they might eaſily become by retrenching that too great Liberty. Neither have the Poets only, but the Criticks too Endeavour'd to compleat us; Mr. *Dennis* and Mr. *Rimer* have by their Ingenious, and judicious labours

taught us to admire the Beauties as we ought, and to know the faults of the former. Nor are we leſs beholding to theſe for forming our Judgments, than to thoſe for raiſing our Fancies.

Theſe are the Sources from whence we draw our gayer part of Converſation; I don't mean in excluſion to the other parts of Poetry, in moſt of which (as I have heard good Judges ſay) we equal at leaſt the Ancients, and far ſurpaſs all the Moderns. I honour the Names, and admire the Writings of *Denham*, *Suckling* and *D'avenant*, I am raviſh'd with the Fancy of *Cowley*, and the Gallantry of *Waller*, I reverence the *Fairy Queen*, am rais'd, and elevated with *Paradiſe Loſt*, *Prince Arthur* compoſes and reduces me to a State of Yawning indifference, and Mr. *W—ſtl—y*'s *Heroicks* lull me to Sleep. Thus all Ranks and Degrees of Poets have their uſe, and may be ſerviceable to ſome body or other from the Prince to the Paſtry Cook, or Paſt-board Box-maker.

ker. I ſhould mention our Satyriſts, but it would be endleſs to deſcend to every particular, of theſe Mr. *Oldham* is admirable, and to go no further, the inimitable Mr. *Butler* will be an everlaſting Teſtimony, of the Wit of his Age, and Nation, and bid eternal defiance to the Wits of all Countries, and future Ages to follow him in a Path before untrack'd. Our Proſe Writers, that are eminent for a gay Style and Jovial Argument, are ſo many, that it would ſwell this Letter too much to name 'em, ſo that I ſhall only take notice, that whoever can read without Pleaſure, or Laughter, *The contempt of the Clergy*, and the following Letters and Dialogues by the ſame Author, or the facetious Dialogues of Mr. *Brown* muſt be more Splenetick than *Heraclitus*, or more ſtupid, than the Aſs he laugh'd at.

Nor are we leſs provided for the ſerious Part; Morality has generally been the Province of our

Clergy who have treated of all parts of it very largely with so much Piety, Solidity, and Eloquence, that as I think I may venture to say, they have written more upon it than the Clergy of all the rest of the World; so I believe no Body will deny that they have written better. Yet I cou'd wish, that our Ingenious Gentlemen wou'd employ their Pens oftner on these Subjects; because the severity of the other's Profession obliges 'em to write with an Air, and in a Style less agreable, and inviting to Young People. Not that we are without many excellent Pieces of Morality, Humanity and Civil Prudence written by, and like Gentlemen. But it is the Excellence of 'em, and the ability of our Gentlemen, which appears in the Spirit, Wit, and curious Observations in those Pieces, which makes me desire more of the same Nature. Who can read the Essays of that Wonderful Man, my Lord *Bacon*, or the no less to be admir'd Sir *Walter Raleigh's*, or Mr. *Osborns* advice to a Son, the

the *Advice to a Daughter*, Sir *William Temple*'s, or Sir *George Mackenzie*'s Eſſays, Sir *Roger L'Eſtrange*'s Eſſay (to which laſt we are likewiſe oblig'd for an incomparable Verſion of *Seneca*) and abundance of others, without wiſhing for more from the ſame, or the like hands? Our Neighbours the *French*, have written a great deal of this kind, of the beſt of which we have the benefit in *Engliſh*; but more particularly the *Meſſieurs*, *Montagne*, *Rochefaucaut*, and St. *Evremont*, deſerve to be immortal in all Languages. I need not mention any more, it is apparent from theſe that Women want not the means of being Wiſe and Prudent without more Tongues than one; nay, and Learned too, if they have any Ambition to be ſo.

The numberleſs Treatiſes of Antiquities, Philoſophy, Mathematicks Natural, and other Hiſtory (in which I can't paſs ſilently by, that learned One of Sir *Walter Raleigh*, which the World he writ of

can't match) written originally in, or tranſlated to our Tongue are ſufficient to lead us a great way into any Science our Curiouſity ſhall prompt us to. The greateſt difficulty we ſtruggled with, was the want of a good Art of Reaſoning, which we had not, that I know of, till that defect was ſupply'd by the greateſt Maſter of that Art Mr. *Locke*, whoſe Eſſay on Human Underſtanding makes large amends for the want of all others in that kind.

Thus, Madam, I have endeavour'd to obviate all our Adverſarie's Objections, by touching upon as great a Variety of things relating to the Subject as I conveniently cou'd. Yet I hope I have troubled you with nothing but what was neceſſary to make my way clear, and plain before me; and I am apt to think I have made it appear, that nothing but diſencouragement or an Idle Uncurious Humour can hinder us from Rivalling moſt Men in the knowledge of great Variety of things,

things, without the help of more Tongues than our Own; which the Men ſo often reproachfully tell us is enough. This Idleneſs is but too frequently to be found among us, but 'tis a Fault equally common to both Sexes. Thoſe that have means to play the Fool all their lives, ſeldom care for the trouble of being made wiſe. We are naturally Lovers of our Eaſe, and have great apprehenſions of the difficulty of things untry'd; Eſpecially in matters of Learning, the common Methods of acquiring which are ſo unpleaſant, and uneaſie. I doubt not but abundance of noble Wits are ſtiffled in both Sexes, for want but of ſuſpecting what they were able to do, and with how much facility. Experience ſhews us every day Blockheads, that arrive at a moderate, nay ſometimes a great Reputation by their Confidence, and briſk attempts which they maintain by their Diligence; while great Numbers of Men naturally more Ingenious lye neglected by, for

want of Induſtry to improve, or Courage to exert themſelves. No Man certainly but wiſhes he had the Reputation in, and were Reſpected and Eſteem'd by the World as he ſees ſome Men are for the Fruits of their Pens; but they are loth to be at the pains of an Attempt, or doubt their ſufficience to perform; or what I believe is moſt general, never to enquire ſo far into themſelves, and their own Abilities, as to bring ſuch a thought into their Heads. This laſt I fancy is the true Reaſon, why our Sex, who are commonly charged with talking too much, are Guilty of Writing ſo little. I wiſh they would ſhake of this lazy Deſpondence, and let the noble examples of the deſervedly celebrated Mrs. *Philips*, and the incomparable Mrs. *Behn*, rouſe their Courages, and ſhew Mankind the great injuſtice of their Contempt. I am confident they would find no ſuch need of the aſſiſtance of Languages as is generally imagin'd. Thoſe that have of their own need not graft upon

Ignorance of Latin, &c. no diſadvantage.

upon Foreign Stocks. I have often thought that the not teaching Women Latin and Greek, was an advantage to them, if it were rightly consider'd, and might be improv'd to a great heigth. For Girles after they can Read and Write (if they be of any Fashion) are taught such things as take not up their whole time, and not being suffer'd to run about at liberty as Boys, are furnish'd among other toys with Books, such as *Romances*, *Novels*, *Plays* and *Poems*; which though they read carelessly only for Diversion, yet unawares to them, give 'em very early a considerable Command both of Words and Sense; which are further improv'd by their making and receiving Visits with their Mothers, which gives them betimes the opportunity of imitating, conversing with, and knowing the manner, and address of elder Persons. These I take to be the true Reasons why a Girl of Fifteen is reckon'd as ripe as a Boy of One and Twenty, and not any natural forwardness of

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Maturity, as ſome People would have it. Theſe advantages the Education of Boys deprives them of, who drudge away the Vigour of their Memories at Words, uſeleſs ever after to moſt of them, and at Seventeen or Eighteen are to begin their Alphabet of Senſe, and are but where the Girles were at Nine or Ten. Yet becauſe they have learnt Latin and Greek, reject with Scorn all *Engliſh* Books their beſt helps, and lay aſide their Latin ones, as if they were already Maſters of all that Learning, and ſo hoiſt Sail for the wide World without a Compaſs to Steer by. Thus I have fairly ſtated the difference between us, and can find no ſuch diſparity in Nature or Education as they contend for; but we have a ſort of ungenerous Adverſaries, that deal more in Scandal than Argument, and when they can't hurt us with their Weapons, endeavour to annoy us with ſtink Pots. Let us ſee therefore, *Madam*, whether we can't beat them from their Ammunition, and turn their

their own Artillery upon them; for I firmly believe there is nothing, which they charge upon us, but may with more Juſtice be retorted upon themſelves.

They tax us with a long Liſt of Faults, and Imperfections, and ſeem to have taken a Catalogue of their own Follies and Vices, not with deſign to correct them, but to ſhift of the Imputation to us. There is no doubt, but particular Women may be found upon whom every charge may be juſtified; but our Sex is not anſwerable for them, till they prove there are no ſuch Men, which will not be before Dooms-day. However, like ill Neighbours they bring the Dirt out of their own Homes not out of Neatneſs, but out of Envy to their Neighbours, at whoſe Doors they lay it. But let them remove their Follies as oft as they pleaſe, they are ſtill as conſtant to them, as the *Needle* to the *North Pole*, they point them out which way ſoever they move. Let us ſee what theſe

Quali-

Qualities are, they ſo liberally beſtow upon, and after ſee how they fit the Donours, and ſurvey 'em in their proper Figures and Colours. The moſt familiar of theſe are Vanity, Impertinence, Enviouſneſs, Diſſimulation, Inconſtancy, &c.

Vanity. To begin with Vanity, it is a Failing the greateſt Part of Mankind are tinctured with, more or leſs. For all Men are apt to flatter themſelves with a Fancy, that they have ſome one or more good Quallities, or extraordinary Gifts, that raiſe 'em above the ordinary Level of Men; and therefore hug and cheriſh, what they think valuable and ſingular in 'em. It is never commendable, ſometimes pardonable, when the excellencies are real, and it is moderate ſo much muſt be allow'd to humane frailty. It is ridiculous and intollerable when it is extravagant, miſplac'd, or groundleſs. It is very injudicious, and makes men commonly dote on their Defects, and expoſe

expoſe their blemiſhes by their Fondneſs, which makes 'em more remarkable by the care and ornament beſtow'd on 'em. It perſuades hard Favour'd and diſtorted Fellows to dreſs, and value their Perſons; Cowards to pretend to Courage, and provoke Beatings; Blockheads to ſet up for Wit, and make themſelves ridiculous in Print; Upſtarts to brag of their Families, and be reminded of the Garrets they were born, and the Stalls they were brought up in. In Women the object of it is their Beauty, and is excuſable in thoſe that have it. Thoſe that have it not may be pardon'd, if they endeavour at it; becauſe it is the only undiſputed advantage our Sex has over the other, and what makes 'em reſpected beyond all other Perfections, and is alone ador'd. In Men it has not only this Object, but all thoſe before mention'd, and a hundred other. It is admirably ſeen in a Writing, reciting Fop Author, is in full Luſtre in a Beau, but its moſt unlucky Proſpect is in

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a Swaggering Coward, who is a Fool beyond the Conviction of Smart. His Courage is like an Ague Fit, that leaves him upon a Fright, and returns when he is out of the reach of a Cudgel. He ſpends much time in the Fencing School, and Fights briskly where there is no danger of Wounds nor Smart. His Hands are inſtructed, but his Heels do him all the Service. He is a nice obſerver of Punctilio's, and takes more Affronts than are given him. He draws firſt, and runs firſt, and if ever he makes another Man run, it is after him. He is a Pebble that ſparkles like a Diamond, but wants hardneſs. He talks perpetually of what he will do, but thinks continually of what he ſhall ſuffer. He is often in Quarels, yet ſeldom in Rencounters, and is glad of a Challenge, that he may know whom, and when to avoid. He brings up the Rear at an Engagement, and leads the Van in the Retreat. He is a Man of much Paſſion, but the moſt predominant is

Character of a Bully.

is his Fear. He offers affronts readily, but has too much honour to juſtifie them, and will ſubmit to any terms of ſatisfaction rather than occaſion Blood-ſhed. He is ſo full of Courage, that it boils over when there is no occaſion, and his *Sword* and *Perſon* are always at Leiſure, and at your Service, till you want them, and then to his great Trouble, he is always indiſpenſably engag'd otherwiſe. He wears *Red*, and a long *Sword* openly to ſhew his Valour, and *Mail* privately to ſhew his Diſcretion. He threatens terribly, but he is like a Witch, if you draw Blood of him, he has no power to hurt you. No man ſhews or boaſts more of his Scars with leſs Reaſon. He ſcorns to take a blow in the Face, and a Back-piece is as good to him as a whole ſute of Armour. He is at firſt the Terrour of all the *Young Bullies*, at laſt their Maygame, and they blood their *Cub Hectors* upon him, as they do young *Beagles* on a *Hare*. Good uſage makes him inſolent, but he fawns like a *Spaniel* moſt upon

upon thoſe that beat him. When he is diſcover'd by all the reſt of the World, the Cheat paſſes ſtill upon himſelf, and he is pleas'd with the terrible Figure he makes in his Glaſs, tho' he is ready to ſhake at his own Shaddow.

Character of a Scowrer.

There are men of an humour directly oppoſite to this, yet e'ry whit as Mad, Fooliſh, and Vain; theſe are your Men of nice Honour, that love Fighting for the ſake of Blows, and are never well but when they are wounded, they are ſevere Interpreters of Looks, are affronted at every Face that don't pleaſe 'em, and like true Cocks of the Game, have a quarrel to all Mankind at firſt ſight. They are paſſionate Admirers of ſcarr'd Faces, and dote on a Wooden Leg. They receive a Challenge like a *Billet Douce*, and a home thruſt as a Favour. Their common Adverſary is the Conſtable, and their uſual Lodging the Counter. Broken heads are a diverſion, and an Arm in a Scarfe is a high ſatisfaction. They are frugall

gal in their expences with the Taylor, for they have their Doublets pinkt on their Backs, but they are as good as an Annuity to the Surgeon, tho' they need him not to let 'em blood. *Flanders* is their Miſtreſs, and a Clap from her carries 'em off the Stage. If they return, an *Hoſpital* is their Retreat, or the *Sheriff* their Executor. Theſe two, *Madam*, are very different extravagances, and very ſtrange ones, yet they are real, and ſuch as appear every day. But, what is moſt to be wonder'd at, ariſe both from the ſame Principle, and the ſame miſtaken Notion, and are only differenc'd by the diverſity of Tempers in Men. The common Motive to both is Vanity, and they jointly concurr in this Opinion, that Valour is the moſt eſtimable, and moſt honourable Quality, that Man is capable of; they agree in a deſire to be honour'd and fear'd, but they differ in their methods in perſuing this common End. The one is naturally active, bold and daring; and therefore takes the true courſe to arrive at it by ſhew-

ing what he can do, by what he dare ſuffer, and his immoderate deſire, and indiſcretion ſuffer him to know no bounds. The other is mean ſpirited, and fearful, and ſeeks by falſe Fire to Counterfeit a heat that may paſs for genuine, to conceal the Froſt in his Blood, and like an ill Actor, over-does his Part for want of underſtanding it, which 'tis impoſſible he ſhou'd. Among peaceable Men, and thoſe of his own Temper he comes off with Colours flying, and thoſe are the Men he wou'd be valiant amongſt only, cou'd he read Men's hearts. But the firſt Rencounter betrays the Aſs through the Lion's Skin, and he is Cudgel'd like an Aſs in ſpite of his Covering. It is our happineſs, *Madam*, that we lie under no manner of Temptation from theſe two Vanities, whereof one is ſo dangerous, the other ſo ridiculous. For all humours that are forc'd againſt the natural bent of our Tempers muſt be ſo. Nature is our beſt guide, and has fitted ev'ry Man for ſomethings more particularly than others; which if

Imitation ridiculous.

if they had the ſenſe to proſecute, they wou'd at leaſt not be ridiculous, if they were not extaordinary. But ſo prevalent are our Vanity, and this Apiſh Humour of Imitation, that we perſuade our ſelves, that we may practiſe with applauſe, whatever we ſee another ſucceed in; tho' as contrary to the intent of our Nature, as Dancing to an Elephant; ſo ſome Men that talk well of ſerious matters, are ſo mov'd at the applauſe ſome merry Drolls gain, that they forget their gravity, and aiming to be Wits, turn Buffoons. There are others, that are ſo taken with the actions and grimace of a good Mimick, that they fall preſently to making awkard Faces and wry Mouths, and are all their lives after in a Vizor, Maskt tho' bare fac'd.

Theſe, and innumerable others of the like Nature, are the leſſer Follies of Mankind, by which their Vanity makes 'em fit only to be laugh'd at. There are others, who by more ſtudied and

refin'd Follies arrive to be more conſiderable, and make a great Figure and Party among their Sex.

Character of a Beau. Of the firſt rank of theſe is the *Beau*, who is one that has more Learning in his Heels than his Head, which is better cover'd than fill'd. His Taylor and his Barber are his Cabinet Councel, to whom he is more beholding for what he is, than to his Maker. He is One that has travell'd to ſee Faſhions, and brought over with him the neweſt cut ſuit, and the prettieſt Fancy'd Ribbands for Sword Knots. His beſt Acquaintance at *Paris* was his Dancing Maſter, whom he calls the *Marquis*, and his chief Viſits to the Opera's. He has ſeen the *French* King once, and knows the name of his chief Miniſter, and is by this ſufficiently convinc'd, that there are no Politicians in any other Part of the World. His improvements are a nice Skill in the Mode, and a high Contempt of his own Country

try, and of Senſe. All the knowledge he has of the Country, or Manners of it, is in the keeping of the Valet that follow'd him hither, and all that he retains of the Language is a few modiſh words to lard his diſcourſe with, and ſhew his Breeding, and the names of his Garniture. He ſhou'd be a Philoſopher, for he ſtudies nothing but himſelf, yet ev'ry one knows him better, that thinks him not worth knowing. His looks and geſtures are his conſtant Leſſon, and his Glaſs is the Oracle that reſolves all his mighty doubts and ſcruples. He examines and refreſhes his Complexion by it, and is more dejected at a Pimple, than if it were a Cancer. When his Eyes are ſet to a languiſhing Air, his Motions all prepar'd according to Art, his Wig and his Coat abundantly Powder'd, his Gloves Eſſenc'd, and his Handkercher perfum'd, and all the reſt of his Bravery rightly adjuſted, the greateſt part of the day, as well the buſineſs of it at home, is over; 'tis time to launch, and down he

Commonly miſtaken.

comes, ſcented like a Perfumers Shop, and looks like a Veſſel with all her rigging under ſail without Ballaſt. A Chair is brought within the door, for he apprehends every Breath of Air as much, as if it were a Hurricane. His firſt Viſit is to the *Chocolate* Houſe, and after a quarter of an Hours Compliment to himſelf in the great Glaſs, he faces about and ſalutes the Company, and puts in practice his Mornings Meditations; When he has made his Cringes round, and play'd over all his Tricks, out comes the fine *Snuff-Box*, and his *Noſe* is Regal'd a while: After this he begins to open, and ſtarts ſome learned Argument about the neweſt Faſhion, and hence takes occaſion to commend the next Man's Fancy in his Cloths, this uſhers in a diſcourſe of the Appearance laſt *Birth Night*, or *Ball* at Court, and ſo a Critick upon this *Lord*, or that *Ladies* Maſquing Habit. From hence he adjourns to the *Play-houſe*, where he is to be met again in the ſide Box, from whence he makes his

his Court to all the Ladies in general with his Eyes, and is particular only with the *Orange-Wench*. After a while he engages ſome neighbouring Vizor, and together they run over all the Boxes, take to pieces every Face, examine every Feature, paſs their Cenſure upon every one, and ſo on to their Dreſs; here he very Judiciouſly gives his opinion upon every particular, and determines whoſe Colours are well choſen, whoſe Fancy is neateſt, and whoſe Cloths ſit with moſt Air; but in concluſion ſees no Body compleat, but himſelf in the whole Houſe. After this he looks down with contempt upon the Pit, and rallies all the ſlovenly Fellows, and awkard Beau's (as he calls them) of t'other End of the Town, is mightily offended at their ill ſcented *Snuff*, and in ſpight of all his *Pulvilio* and *Eſſences*, is overcome with the ſtink of their *Cordovant Gloves*. To cloſe all, *Madam*, in the Mask muſt give him an account of the Scandal of the Town, which ſhe does in the Hiſtory of abundance of Intrigues, real or feign'd; at

all which he laughs aloud and often, not to ſhew his ſatisfaction, but his Teeth. She ſhews him who is kept by ſuch a Lord, Who was lately diſcarded by ſuch a Knight, for granting Favour too indiſcreetly to ſuch a Gentlemen: who has lately been in the Country for two or thee Months upon extraordinary Occaſions, To all which he gives great attention, that he may paſs for a Man of Intelligence in another Place. His next Stage is *Locket's*, where his Vanity, not his Stomach, is to be gratified with ſomething that is *little* and *dear*, *Quails* and *Ortalans* are the meaneſt of his Diet, and a Spoonful of *Green Peaſe* at *Chriſtmas*, are worth to him more than the inheritance of the *Feild* where they grow in *Summer*. Every thing falls in his Eſteem, as it fall in price, and he wou'd not ſo much as taſt the *Wine*, if the hard name, and the high rate did not give it a reliſh. After a glaſs, or two, (for a Pint is his ſtint) he begins to talk of his Intrigues, boaſts much of the Favours he has received, ſhews

counter-

counterfeit Tokens, and in Concluſion ſlanders ſome Lady, or other of unqueſtion'd Vertue with a particular fondneſs for him. His Amours are all profound Secrets, yet he makes a confidence of 'em to every Man he meets with. He pretends a great reverence for the Ladies, and a mighty tenderneſs of their Reputations; yet he is like a *Fleſh Flye*, whatever he blows on is tainted. He talks of nothing under Quality, tho' he never obtain'd a Favour which his Man might not have for half a Crown. He, and his Footman in this Caſe are like *Engliſh*, and *Dutch* at an Ordinary in *Holland*, the Fare is the ſame, but the Price is vaſtly different. Thus the Show goes forward, till he is beaten for Treſpaſſes he was never guilty of, and ſhall be damn'd for Sins he never Committed. At laſt, with his Credit as low as his Fortune he retires ſullenly to his Cloiſter, the *King's-Bench*, or *Fleet*, and paſſes the reſt of his days in Privacy, and Contemplation. Here, *Madam*, if you pleaſe

pleaſe wee'l give him one *Viſit* more, and ſee the laſt *Act* of the *Farce*; and you ſhall find him (whoſe Sobriety was before a *Vice*, as being only the *Pimp* to his other *Pleaſures*, and who fear'd a lighted *Pipe* as much as if it had been a great *Gun* levell'd at him) with his *Noſe Flaming*, and his *Breath* ſtinking of Spirits worſe than a *Dutch Tarpawlin's*, and ſmoking out of a ſhort *Pipe*, that for ſome Months has been kept hot as conſtantly as a *Glaſs-Houſe*, and ſo I leave him to his Meditation.

You wou'd think it yet more ſtrange, that any one ſhould be *Slovenly* and *Naſty* out of *Vanity*; yet ſuch there are I can aſſure you, *Madam*, and cou'd eaſily give a deſcription of 'em, but that ſo foul a Relation muſt needs be Nauſeous to a Perſon ſo Neat as your *Self*; and wou'd be treating You as the *Country Squire* did his *Court Friend*, who when he had ſhew'd him all the Curioſities of his Houſe and Gardens, carried him into his Hog-

ſties.

ſties. But there are more than enow to juſtifie what I have ſaid of the Humour of *Diogenes*, who was as vain and as proud in his *Tub*, as *Plato* cou'd be in the midſt of his fine *Perſian Carpets*, and rich *Furniture*. Vanity is only an Ambition of being taken notice of, which ſhews it ſelf variouſly according to the humour of the Perſons; which was more extravagant in the *Anti-Beau*, than in the *Beau Philoſopher*. Vanity is the verieſt *Proteus* in the World, it can Ape *Humility*, and can make Men decry themſelves on purpoſe to be Flatter'd; like ſome cunning *Preachers* that cry up *Mortification*, and *Self-denial* perpetually, and are pamper'd all the while by the Zeal, and at the Charges of their Followers, who are affraid the good Man ſhou'd ſtarve himſelf. It is the Bleſſing of Fools, and the Folly of Ingenious Men. For it makes thoſe contentedly hugg themſelves under all the ſcorn of the World, and the Indignities that are offer'd 'em, and thoſe reſtleſs and diſſatisfied with

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its applauſe. Both think the World envious, and that their merit is injur'd, and it is impoſſible, to right either of 'em to their Minds; for thoſe have no title to the pretence of merit, and theſe not ſo much as they think they have. Yet it is the Happineſs of the firſt that they can think themſelves capable of moving *Envy*; for though they commonly miſtake the Deriſion of Men, for their applauſe, yet Men are ſometimes ſo ill Natur'd as to undeceive 'em, and then it is their Comfort, that theſe are envious Men, and miſrepreſent the Worlds opinion of 'em. Cou'd theſe Men be convinc'd of their miſtake, I ſee nothing that ſhou'd hinder them from being deſperate, and hanging or diſpoſing of themſelves ſome other ſuch way. For though a Man may comfort himſelf under Afflictions, it is either that they are undeſerved, or if deſerved, that he ſuffers only for Overſights, or raſh Acts, by which the wiſeſt Man may be ſometimes overtaken; that he is in the main Diſcreet and Pru-

Vanity a Bleſſing to Fools.

Prudent, and that others believe him ſo. But when a Man falls under his own *Contempt*, and does not only think himſelf not wiſe, but by *Nature* made abſolutely incapable of ever becoming *Wiſe*, he is in a deplorable *State*, and wants the common *Comfort*, as well of *Fools*, as *Wiſe Men*, Vanity; which in ſuch a Caſe is the only proper *Mediatour* of a *Reconcilement*. No Quality ſeems to be more Providentially diſtributed to every Man according to his Neceſſity; for thoſe that have leaſt Wit, ought to have the greateſt Opinion of it; as all other Commodities are rated higheſt, where they are ſcarceſt. By this means the level is better maintain'd amongſt Men, who, were this imaginary Equality deſtroy'd, might be apt to reverence, and idolize one another too much, and (forgetting the common Fate, they are all Born to) pay Honours too near divine to their Fellow Mortals. But as the humour of the World now runs, this ſort of *Idolatry* is ſcarce likely to come into

to

to Faſhion. We have too great an Opinion of our ſelves, to believe too well of any one elſe, and we are in nothing more difficult than in points of Wit and Underſtanding, in either of which we very unwillingly yield the Preference to any Man. There is nothing of which we affect to ſpeak with more humility and indifference than our own Senſe, yet nothing of which we think with more Partiality, and Preſumption. There have been ſome ſo bold as to aſſume the Title of the *Oracles* of *Reaſon* to themſelves, and their own Writings; and we meet with others daily, that think themſelves *Oracles* of *Wit*. Theſe are the moſt Vexatious Animals in the World, that think they have a Priviledge to torment and plague every Body; but thoſe moſt, who have the beſt Reputation for their Wit or Judgment; as *Fleas* are ſaid to moleſt thoſe moſt, who have the tendereſt *Skins*, and the ſweeteſt *Blood*.

Of theſe the moſt voluminous Fool is the Fop Poet, who is own that has

has always more Wit in his Pockets than any where elſe, yet ſeldom or never any of his own there. *Eſop*'s *Daw* was a *Type* of him; For he makes himſelf fine with the Plunder of all Parties. He is a Smuggler of Wit, and ſteals *French* Fancies without paying the cuſtomary Duties. Verſe is his *Manufacture*; For it is more the labour of his Finger than his brain. He ſpends much time in Writing, but ten times more in Reading what he has Written. He is loaden conſtantly with more Papers, and duller than a *Clerk* in *Chancery*, and ſpends more time in *Hearings*, and *Rehearings*. He asks your Opinion, yet for fear you ſhou'd not jump with him, tells you his own firſt. He deſires no Favour, yet is diſappointed, if he be not Flatter'd, and is offended always at the Truth. His firſt Education is generally a *Shop*, or a *Counting-Houſe*, where his acquaintance commences with the *Bell-man* upon a New Years day. He puts him upon Intriguing with the *Muſes*, and promiſes to *Pimp* for

Character of a Poetaſter.

for him. From this time forward he hates the name of *Mechanick*, and reſolves to ſell all his ſtock, and purchaſe a Plantation in *Parnaſſus*. He is now a Poetical *Harberdaſher* of *Small Wares*, and deals very much in *Novels*, *Madrigals*, *Riddles*, *Funeral* and *Love Odes*, and *Elegies*, and other Toyes from *Helicon*, which he has a Shop ſo well furniſh'd with, that he can fit you with all ſorts, and Sizes, upon all Occaſions in the twinkling of an Eye. He frequents *Apollo*'s *Exchange* in *Covent-Garden*, and picks up the freſheſt Intelligence, what *Plays* are upon the Stocks, or ready to be launch'd; who have lately made a good Voyage, who a ſaving one only, and who have ſuffer'd a Wreck in *Lincoln*'s-*Inn-Feilds*, or *Drury-Lane*, and which are brought into the Dock to be Careen'd, and fitted for another Voyage. He talks much of *Jack Dryden*, and *Will. Wycherley*, and the reſt of that Set, and proteſts he can't help having ſome reſpect for 'em, becauſe they have ſo much for him, and his Writings;

Writings; otherwiſe he cou'd ſhew 'em to be meer Sots and Blockheads that underſtand little of Poetry, in compariſon of himſelf; but he forbears 'em meerly out of Gratitude, and Compaſſion. Once a Month he fits out a ſmall *Poetical Smeck* at the charge of his Bookſeller, which he lades with *French Plunder* new vampt in *Engliſh*, ſmall Ventures of *Tranſlated Odes*, *Elegies* and *Epigrams* of Young Traders, and ballaſts with heavy *Proſe* of his own; for which returns are to be made to the ſeveral Owners in Teſters, or applauſe from the Prentices and Tyre Women that deal for 'em. He is the Oracle of thoſe that want Wit, and the Plague of thoſe that have it; for he haunts their Lodgings, and is more terrible to 'em, than their Duns. His Pocket is an unexhauſtible Magazine of *Rhime*, and *Nonſenſe*, and his Tongue like a repeating Clock with Chimes, is ready upon every touch to ſound to 'em. Men avoid him for the ſame Reaſon, they avoid the *Pillory*, the ſecurity of their

Ears; of which he is as mercileſs a Proſecutor. He is the Bane of Society, a Friend to the Stationers, the Plague of the Preſs, and the Ruine of his Bookſeller. He is more profitable to the *Grocers* and *Tabacconiſts*, than the *Paper Manufacture*; for his Works, which talk ſo much of Fire and Flame, commonly expire in their Shops in *Vapour* and *Smoak*. If he aſpire to *Comedy*, he intrigues with ſome experienc'd *Damſel* of the *Town*, in order to inſtruct himſelf in the humour of it, and is cullied by her into *Matrimony*, and ſo is furniſh'd at once with a Plot, and two good Characters, himſelf and his Wife, and is paid with a Portion for a Jointure in *Parnaſſus*, which I leave him to make his beſt of.

Vanity Univerſal.

I ſhall not trouble you with any more Inſtances of the fooliſh vanities of Mankind; becauſe I am affraid I have been too large upon that Head already. Not that I think there is any Order or Degree of Men, which wou'd not afford many

many and notorious Inſtances for our Purpoſe. For as I think *Vanity* almoſt the Univerſal mover of all our Actions, whether good or bad; ſo I think there are ſcarce any Man ſo Ingenious, or ſo Vertuous, but ſomething of it will ſhine through the greateſt Part of what they do, let them caſt never ſo thick a Vail over it. What makes Men ſo ſolicitous of leaving a Reputation behind 'em in the World, though they know they can't be affected with it after Death, but this even to a degree of Folly? What elſe makes great Men involve themſelves in the Fatigues and hazards of War, and intricate Intrigues of State, when they have already more than they can enjoy, but an Itch of being talk'd of and remembred, to which they ſacrifice their preſent happineſs and repoſe?

But I ſhall carry theſe Conſiderations no farther; becauſe I have already ſingled out ſome of thoſe many, whoſe *Vanity* is more extravagant and ridiculous, than any our

Sex is chargeable with, theſe ſlight Touches may ſerve to let 'em ſee, that even the greateſt, and Wiſeſt are not wholely exempt, if they have it not in a higher Degree, tho' they exerciſe it in things more Popular, and Plauſible. I hope therefore the burthen of this good Quality will not hereafter be laid upon us alone, but the Men will be contented to divide the Load with us, and be thankful that they bear leſs than their Proportion.

Impertinence.

Impertinence comes next under Conſideration, in which I ſhall be as brief, as I conveniently can, in regard I have been ſo long upon the preceding Head. *Impertinence* is a humour of buſying our ſelves about things trivial, and of no Moment in themſelves, or unſeaſonably in things of no concern to us, or wherein we are able to do nothing to any Purpoſe. Here our Adverſaries inſult over us, as if they had gain'd an intire *Victory*, and the *Field* were indiſputable; but they ſhall have no cauſe for *Triumph*,

Triumph, this is no Poſt of ſuch mighty advantage as they fondly perſuade themſelves. This *Preſumption* ariſes from an Erroneous Conceit, that all thoſe things in which they are little concern'd, or conſulted, are triffles below their care or notice, which indeed they are not by Nature ſo well able to manage. Thus, when they hear us talking to, and adviſing one another about the Order, Diſtribution and Contrivance of *Houſhold Affairs*, about the *Regulation* of the *Family*, and *Government* of *Children* and *Servants*, the provident management of a *Kitchin*, and the decent ordering of a *Table*, the ſuitable *Matching* and convenient diſpoſition of *Furniture*, and the like, they preſently condemn us for impertinence. Yet they may be pleaſed to conſider, that as the affairs of the World are now divided betwixt us, the *Domeſtick* are our ſhare, and out of which we are rarely ſuffer'd to interpoſe our Senſe. They may be pleaſed to conſider likewiſe, that as light and inconſiderable as theſe things

Commonly miſtaken.

ſeem, they are capable of no Pleaſures of Senſe higher, or more refin'd than others of *Brutes* without our care of 'em. For were it not for that, their Houſes wou'd be meer *Bedlams*, their moſt luxurious Treats, but a rude confuſion of ill Digeſted, ill mixt Scents and Reliſhes, and the fine Furniture, they beſtow ſo much coſt on, but an expenſive heap of glittering *Rubbiſh*. Thus they are beholding to us for the comfortable enjoyment of what their labour, or good Fortune hath acquir'd or beſtow'd, and think meanly of our care only, becauſe they underſtand not the value of it. But if we ſhall be thought impertinent for Diſcourſes of this Nature, as I deny not but we ſometimes juſtly may, when they are unſeaſonable; what cenſure muſt thoſe Men bear, who are perpetually talking of *Politicks*, *State Affairs* and *Grievances* to us, in which perhaps neither they nor We are much concern'd, or if we be, are not able to propoſe, much leſs to apply any Remedy to 'em? Surely theſe are

impertinent

impertinent; not to call the *Beau*, or *Poetaſter* on the *Stage* again, whoſe whole Lives are one continued ſcene of Folly and Impertinence; let us make the beſt of our *News-Monger*.

Character of a Coffee-Houſe Politician.

He is one whoſe Brains having been once over heated, retain ſomething of the Fire in 'em ever after. He miſtakes his Paſſion for Zeal, and his Noiſe and Buſtling, for Services. He is always full of Doubts, Fears and Jealouſies, and is never without ſome noteable Diſcovery of a deep laid Deſign, or a dangerous Plot found out in a *Meal Tub*, or *Petticoat*. He is a mighty Liſtner after *Prodigies*, and never hears of a *Whale*, or a *Comet*, but he apprehends ſome ſudden *Revolution* in the State, and looks upon a *Groaning-board*, or a *Speaking-head*, as fore-runners of the *Day* of *Judgment*. He is a great Lover of the King, but a bitter Enemy to all about him, and thinks it impoſſible for him to have any but *Evil Counſellors*, and though he be very zea-

lous for the Government, yet he never finds any thing in it but *Grievances* and *Miſcarriages* to declaim upon. He is a Well-wiſher to the *Church*, but he is never to be reconcil'd to the *Biſhops* and *Clergy*, and rails moſt inveterately at the *Act* of *Uniformity*. He hates *Perſecution* implacably, and contends furiouſly for *Moderation*, and can ſcarce think well of the *Toleration*, becauſe it is an Act of the State. He profeſſes himſelf of the *Church* of *England*, pretends to like the Worſhip of it, but he goes to Meetings in ſpight to the *Parſon* of his *Pariſh*. His *Conſcience* is very tender and ſcrupulous in Matters of Ceremony, but it it as ſteely and touch as Brawn behind his Counter, and can digeſt any Sin of Gain. He lodges at home, but he lives at the *Coffee-houſe*. He converſes more with *News Papers*, *Gazettes* and *Votes*, than with his *Shop Books*, and his conſtant Application to the *Publick* takes him off all Care for his *Private Concern*. He is always ſettling the *Nation*, yet cou'd never manage his

own

own *Family*. He is a mighty Stickler at all *Elections*, and tho' he has no *Vote*, thinks it impoſſible any thing ſhou'd go right unleſs he be there to Bawl for it. His buſineſs is at *Home*, but his thoughts are in *Flanders*, and he is earneſtly inveſting of Towns till the *Sheriff*'s *Officers* beleaguer his Doors. He is buſie in forcing of *Counterſcarps*, and ſtorming of *Breaches*, while his *Creditors* take his *Shop* by ſurprize, and make Plunder of his *Goods*. Thus by mending the *State*, He marrs his own *Fortune*; and never leaves talking of the *Laws* of the *Land*, till the Execution of 'em ſilence him.

This ſort of Impertinents the *Coffee-houſes* are every day full of; nay, ſo far has this contagious Impertinence ſpread it ſelf, that *Private Houſes*, and *Shops*, nay, the very *Streets* and *Bulks* are infected, and peſter'd with Politicks and News. Not a Pot cou'd go glibly down, or a ſtitch go merrily forward without *Namur*, a while ago; 'twas *Spice* to *Porter*'s *Ale*, and

Wax

Wax to the *Coller*'s *Thread*; th
one ſuſpended his Draught, an
the other his Awl, to enquire wh
was become of the *Rogue*, and wer
very glad to hear he was taken
and expected no doubt he ſhou'd
come over and make 'em a *Holi-da*
at his Execution. They were migh
tily rejoyc'd at the Arreſting of th
Mareſchal *Boufflers*, and made n
queſtion but they ſhou'd ſee him
amongſt the reſt of the *Beaſts a*
Bartholomew Fair for Two Pence.
This Folly of the *Mob* was in ſom
meaſure excuſable, becauſe their ig
norance led 'em into an expectation
of ſeeing what had given the Worl
ſo much Trouble. But thoſe tha
have better knowledge of things
have no ſuch *Plea*, they ought t
have been wiſer, than to have buſ
ſied themſelves ſo much, and ſo
earneſtly about Affairs, which all
their care and Sollicitude could have
no more Influence upon, than over
the Weather. 'Twas pleaſant to ſee
what Shoals the report of the ar
rival of a *Holland*, or *Flanders Mail*,
brought to the *Secretary*'s *Office*, the

Poſt

Poſt-Office, and the *Coffee-Houſe*; every one Crowding to catch the News firſt, which as ſoon as they had, they poſted away like ſo many Expreſſes to diſperſe it among their Neighbours at more diſtance, that waited with Ears prickt up to receive 'em, or walk'd uneaſily with a Fooliſh Impatience to and from the Door or Window, as if their looking out ſo often wou'd fetch 'em the ſooner. Moſt Men in their News are like *Beau*'s in their Diet, the worſt is welcome while 'tis freſh and ſcarce, and the beſt is not worth a Farthing when it has been blown upon; and commonly they fare like *Beau*'s, are fond of it while 'tis young and inſipid, and neglect it when 'tis grown up to its full, and true reliſh. No ſooner is it rumour'd that a Breach is made in the *Caſtle Wall*, or the *White Flag* hung out, but a *Council of War* is call'd in every *Coffee-houſe* in Town; the *French* and *Dutch Prints*, their Intelligencies are call'd for immediately, and examin'd, and not a ſhot is mention'd, but they ſtart as if the

Ball

Ball whizz'd just then by their Ears. After this follows a serious debate about a general Assault, and whether they shall storm immediately, or not; who shall begin the Attack; what Conditions shall be granted on Capitulation. The Castle of *Namur* thus taken, or Surrender'd, they proceed to take their Measures, and settle the next Campaign, and whatever harm we suffer by those mischievous *French* in the Field, they are sure to take sufficient Revenge, and pay 'em off Swingingly in the *Coffee-house*: But as if this were not enough, Our greatest Actions must be Buffoon'd in Show, as well as Talk. Shall *Namur* be taken, and our Hero's of the City not shew their Prowess upon so great an Occasion? It must never be said, that the *Coffee-houses* dar'd more than *Moor-Fields*; No, for the honour of *London*, out comes the Foreman of the *Shop*, very formidable in *Buff* and *Bandileers*, and away he marches with Feather in Cap, to the general Rendezvous in the *Artillary Ground*. There these terrible Mimicks of

City Militia.

Mars

Mars are to ſpend their Fury in *Noiſe* and *Smoak*, upon a *Namur*, erected for that purpoſe on a *Mole-hill*, and by the help of *Guns* and *Drums* out-ſtink, and out-rattle *Smith-field* in all its Bravery, and wou'd be too hard for the greateſt Man in all *France*, if they had him but amongſt 'em. Yet this is but Skirmiſhing, the hot Service is in another Place, when they engage the *Capons*, and *Quart Pots*; never was Onſet more Vigorous, for they come to handy-Blows immediately, and now is the real cutting and ſlaſhing, and tilting without Quarter: Were the Towns in *Flanders* all wall'd with *Beef*, and the *French* as good meat as *Capons*, and dreſt the ſame way, the King need never beat his Drums for Soldiers; all theſe Gallant Fellows wou'd come in Voluntarily, the meaneſt of which would be able to eat a Mareſchal, and whom nothing cou'd oppoſe in conjunction.

Nothing is more common, and familiar, than this ſort of Impertinence;

ence; Moſt Men wou'd have little to do, did they buſie themſelves about nothing, but what they underſtood, or were concern'd in. A Monkey is not liker a Man in his Figure, than in his humour. How ready are all Mankind to cenſure without authority, and to give advice unaskt, and without reaſon. They are very much miſtaken, that think this forwardneſs to thruſt themſelves into other's affairs, ſprings from any Principle of Charity or Tenderneſs of 'em, or the leaſt Regard to the Welfare of their Neighbours. 'Tis only a vain Conceit that they are wiſer, and more able to adviſe, which puts 'em upon engaging in things they have nothing to do with, and paſſing their Judgments Magiſterially on matters they have no Cognizance of, and generally little Information, or Skill in. They are deſirous, the World ſhou'd have as great an Opinion of 'em, as they have of themſelves, and therefore impertinently interpoſe their own Authority and Senſe, tho' never ſo little to the purpoſe, only

Officious Impertinences.

to

to ſhew how well they cou'd manage, were it their Buſineſs; thus they adviſe without good intention, or kindneſs, and cenſure without deſign, or malice to the Perſons counſell'd, or reflected on. Theſe buzzing Inſects ſwarm as thick every where, and are as troubleſome as *Muskettoes* in the *Weſt-Indies*. They are perpetually in a hurry of Buſineſs, yet are forc'd to rack their Inventions to employ their Leiſure. They are very buſie for every Body, and ſerve no Body. There are always in haſt, and think themſelves expected every where with Impatience, yet come ſooner always than they are welcome. They will walk a Mile, and ſpend an hour to tell any one how urgent their Buſineſs is, and what haſt they are in to be gone. Their Expedition is their greateſt Loſs, for time is the only thing that lies heavy upon their hands. They are walking *Gazettes*, that carry News from one Neighbour to another, and have their Stages about the Town as regular and certain, as a *Penny-Poſt-man*.

Every

Every Man is their Acquaintance, but no Man their Friend. They drudge for every Body, and are paid by no Body, and though their Lives be worn out in endeavours to oblige all Mankind, when they die no one regrets their Loſs, or miſſes their Service.

Character of a Vertuoſo.

There are another ſort of Impertinents, who, as they mind not the Buſineſs of other Men where it concerns 'em not, neglect it likewiſe where it does; and amuſe themſelves continually with the Contemplation of thoſe things, which the reſt of the World ſlight as uſeleſs, and below their regard. Of theſe the moſt Egregious is the *Vertuoſo*, who is one that has ſold an Eſtate in Land, to purchaſe one in *Scallop*, *Conch*, *Muſcle*, *Cockle Shells*, *Periwinkles*, *Sea Shrubs*, *Weeds*, *Moſſes*, *Sponges*, *Coralls*, *Corallines*, *Sea Fans*, *Pebbles*, *Marchaſites*, and *Flint-ſtones*; and has abandon'd the Acquaintance, and Society of Men, for that of Inſects, *Worms*, *Grubbs*, *Maggots*, *Flies*, *Moths*, *Locuſts*, *Beetles*

tles, *Spiders*, *Graſhoppers*, *Snails*, *Lizards* and *Tortoiſes*. His ſtudy is like *Noah*'s Ark, the general Rendezvous of all Creatures in the *Univerſe*, and the greateſt part of his Moveables are the remainders of his Deluge. His Travels are not deſign'd as Viſits to the Inhabitants of any place, but to the Pits, Shores and Hills; from whence he fetches not the Treaſure, but the Trumpery. He is raviſh'd at finding an uncommon ſhell, or an odd ſhap'd Stone, and is deſperately enamour'd at firſt ſight of an unuſual markt Butter-flie, which he will hunt a whole day to be Maſter of. He Trafficks to all places, and has his Correſpondents in e'ery part of the World; yet his Merchandizes ſerve not to promote our Luxury, nor encreaſe our Trade, and neither enrich the Nation, nor himſelf. A Box or two of *Pebbles* or *Shells*, and a dozen of *Waſps*, *Spiders* and *Caterpillers* are his Cargoe. He values a *Camelion*, or *Salamander's* Egg, above all the Sugars and Spices of the *Weſt* and *Eaſt-Indies*,

and wou'd give more for the Shell of a *Star-fiſh*, or *Sea Urchin* entire, than for a whole *Dutch* Herring Fleet. He viſits Mines, Colepits, and Quarries frequently, but not for that ſordid end that other Men uſually do, *viz.* gain; but for the ſake of the foſſile Shells and Teeth that are ſometimes found there. He is ſmatterer at *Botany*, but for fear of being ſuſpected of any uſeful deſign by it, he employs his curioſity only about *Moſſes*, *Graſſes*, *Brakes*, *Thiſtles*, &c. that are not accus'd of any vertue in Medicine, which he diſtinguiſhes and divides very nicely. He preſerves carefully thoſe *Creatures*, which other Men induſtriouſly deſtroy, and cultivates ſedulouſly thoſe Plants, which others root up as Weeds. He is the Embalmer of deceas'd Vermin, and dreſſes his Mummyes with as much care, as the Ancient *Egyptians* did their Kings. His Caſh conſiſts much in old Coins, and he thinks the Face of *Alexander* in one of 'em worth more than all his Conqueſts. His Inventory is a Liſt of the In-

ſects

ſects of all Countries, and the Shells and Pebbles of all Shoars, which can no more be compleat without two or three of remarkable *Signatures*, than an *Apothecaries* Shop without a *Tortoiſe* and a *Crocodile*, or a Country *Barber*'s without a batter'd *Cittern*. A piece of Ore with a Shell in it is a greater Preſent than if it were fine Gold, and a ſtring of *Wampompeag* is receiv'd with more joy, than a *Rope* of *Orient Pearl*, or *Diamonds* wou'd be. His Collection of *Garden-Snails*, *Cockle-Shells* and *Vermine* compleated, (as he thinks) he ſets up for a *Philoſopher*, and nothing leſs than Univerſal Nature will ſerve for a Subject, of which he thinks he has an entire Hiſtory in his *Lumber-Office*. Hence forward he *ſtruts* and *ſwells*, and deſpiſes all thoſe little inſignificant Fellows, that can make no better uſe of thoſe noble inconteſtable Evidences of the Univerſal Deluge, *Scallop* and *Oyſter Shells*, than to ſtew *Oyſters*, or melt *Brimſtone* for *Matches*. By this time he thinks it neceſſary to give the

World an *Eſſay* of his Parts, that it may think as highly of 'em (if poſſible) as he does himſelf; and finding *Moſes* hard beſet of late, he reſolves to give him a lift, and defend his Flood, to which he is ſo much oblig'd for ſparing his darling Toys only. But as great Maſters uſe, he corrects him ſometimes for not ſpeaking to his Mind, and gives him the lie now and then in order to ſupport his Authority. He ſhakes the World to Atoms with eaſe, which melts before him as readily as if it were nothing but a Ball of Salt. He pumps even the Center, and drains it of imaginary ſtores by imaginary Loopholes, as if punching the Globe full of holes cou'd make his *Hypotheſis* hold Water. He is a Man of *Expedition*, and does that in a few days, which coſt *Moſes* ſome Months to compleat. He is a Paſſionate Admirer of his own Works without a Rival, and ſuperciliouſly contemns all *Anſwer's*, yet the leaſt *Objection* throws him into the Vapours. He ſets up for a grand *Philoſopher*, and palms

palms *Hypotheſis* upon the World, which future Ages may (if they pleaſe) expect to hear his Arguments for; at preaſent he is in no humour to give 'em any other ſatisfaction than his own word, that he is infallible. Yet thoſe that have a Faith complacent enough to take a Gentleman's word for his own great Abilities, may perhaps be admitted to a ſight of his grand Demonſtration, his *Raree Show*; the particulars of which he repeats to 'em in a whining *Tone* e'ry whit as formal and merry, though not ſo Muſical, as the Fellows that uſed formerly to carry *theirs at their Backs*. His ordinary diſcourſe is of his *Travels under Ground*, in which he has gone farther (if he may be believ'd) than a whole Warren of *Conies*. Here he began his Collection of Furniture, for his Philoſophical *Toy Shop*, which he will conclude with his Fortune, and then like all Fleſh revert to the place from whence he came, and be tranſlated only from one Shop to another.

This, *Madam*, is another ſort of Impertinence our Sex are not liable to; one wou'd think that none but *Mad Men*, or highly *Hypochondriacal*, cou'd employ themſelves at this rate. I appeal to you, or indeed to any Man of Senſe, whether acts like the wiſer Animal; the Man that with great care and pains diſtinguiſhes and divides the many Varieties of Graſs, and finds no other Fruit of his labour, than the charging of his Memory with abundance of ſuperfluous Names; or the Aſs that eats all promiſcuouſly, and without diſtinction to ſatisfy his *Appetite* and ſupport *Nature*. To what purpoſe is it, that theſe Gentlemen ranſack all Parts both of *Earth* and *Sea* to procure theſe *Triffles*? It is only that they may give their Names to ſome yet unchriſten'd Shell or Inſect. I know that the deſire of knowledge, and the diſcovery of things yet unknown is the Pretence; But what Knowledge is it; What Diſcoveries do we owe to their Labours? It is only the Diſcovery of ſome few unheeded Varieties of Plants, Shells,

or

or Inſects, unheeded only becauſe uſeleſs; and the Knowledge, they boaſt ſo much of, is no more than a Regiſter of their Names, and Marks of Diſtinction only. It is enough for them to know that a *Silk-Worm* is a ſort of *Caterpiller*, that when it is come to maturity Weaves a *Web*, is metamorphos'd to a *Moth-Flye*, lays Eggs, and ſo Dies. They leave all further enquiry to the Unlearned and Mechanicks, whoſe Buſineſs only they think it to proſecute matters of Gain and Profit. Let them contrive, if they can, to make this *Silk* ſerviceable to *Mankind*; their *Speculations* have another *Scope*, which is the founding ſome wild, uncertain, conjectural *Hypotheſis*, which may be true or falſe; yet Mankind neither Gainers nor Loſers either way a tittle in point of *Wiſdom* or Convenience. Theſe Men are juſt the reverſe of a *Rattle Snake*, and carry in their *Heads*, what he does in his *Tail*, and move Laughter rather than Regard. What improvements of *Phyſick*, or any uſeful Arts,

what noble Remedies, what ſerviceable Inſtruments have theſe *Muſhrome*, and *Cockel-ſhell* Hunters oblig'd the World with? For I am ready to recant if they can ſhew ſo good a Med'cine as Stew'd *Prunes*, or ſo neceſſary an Inſtrument as a *Flye Flap* of their own Invention and Diſcovery. Yet theſe are the Men of exalted Underſtandings, the Men of elevated Capacities, and ſublime Speculations, that Dignifie and Diſtinguiſh themſelves from the reſt of the World by ſpecious Names, and pompous Titles and continue notwithſtanding as very *Reptiles* in Senſe, as thoſe they converſe ſo much with.

I wou'd not have any Body miſtake me ſo far, as to think I wou'd in the leaſt reflect upon any ſincere, and intelligent Enquirer into Nature, of which I as heartily wiſh a better knowledge, as any *Vertuoſo* of 'em all. You can be my Witneſs, *Madam*, that I us'd to ſay, I thought Mr. *Boyle* more honourable for his learned Labours, than for his Noble Birth;

Birth; and that the *Royal Society*, by their great and celebrated Performances, were an Illuſtrious Argument of the Wiſdom of the *Auguſt* Prince, their Founder of happy *Memory*; and that they highly merited the *Eſteem*, *Reſpect* and *Honour* paid 'em by the Lovers of Learning all *Europe* over. But though I have a very great Veneration for the *Society* in general, I can't but put a vaſt difference between the particular Members that compoſe it. Where *Supererogation*, a Doctrine in Faſhion, 'tis probable ſome of 'em might borrow of their Fellows merit enough to juſtifie their Arrogance, but alas they are come an Age too late for that trick; They are fallen into a Faithleſs, Incredulous Generation of Men, that will give credit no farther than the viſible Stock will extend: And tho' a *Vertuoſo* ſhould ſwell a Title-Page even till it burſt with large Promiſes, and ſonorous Titles, the World is ſo ill natur'd as not to think a whit the better of a Book for it. 'Tis an ill time to trade with implicite

plicite Faith, when ſo many have ſo lately been broken by an over-ſtock of that *Commodity*; no ſooner now a days can a Man write, or ſteal an Hypotheſis, and promiſe Demonſtration for it hereafter in this, or the next World; but out comes ſome malicious Anſwer or other, with Reaſons in hand againſt it, overthrows the credit of it, and puts the poor Author into Fits. For though a great Philoſopher that has written a Book of three Shillings may reaſonably inſult, and deſpiſe a ſix penny Anſwer, yet the Indignity of ſo low pric'd a Refutation wou'd make a *Stoick* fret, and *Frisk* like a Cow with a Breeze in her Tail, or a Man bitten by a *Tarantula*. Men meaſure themſelves by their *Vanity*, and are greater or leſs in their own Opinions, according to the proportion they have of it; if they be well ſtock'd with it, it may be caſie to confute, but impoſſible to convince 'em. He therefore that would ſet up for a great Man, ought firſt to be plentifully provided of it, and then a Score of *Cockle Shells*,

a

a dozen of *Hodmandods*, or any Triffle elſe is a ſufficient Foundation to build a Reputation upon. But if a Man ſhall abdicate his lawful Calling in pure affection to theſe things, and has for ſome years ſpent all the Time and Money he was Maſter of in proſecution of this Paſſion, and ſhall after all hear his *Caterpillars* affronted, and his *Butter-flies* irreverently ſpoken of, it muſt be more provoking to him, than 'tis to a *Lion* to be pull'd by the *Beard*. And if, when to crown all his Labours, he has diſcover'd a Water ſo near a kin to the famous one, that cou'd be kept in nothing but the hoof of an Aſs, that it was never found but in the *Scull* of the ſame *Animal*; a Water that makes no more of melting a *World*, than a *Dutchman* does of a *Ferkin* of *Butter*; and when he has written a Book of Diſcoveries, and Wonders thereupon, if (I ſay) the Impertinent Scriblers of the Age, will ſtill be demanding *Proofs*, and writing *Anſwers*, he has reaſon to throw down his Pen in a rage, and pronounce

pronounce the world, that cou'd give him ſuch an interruption, unworthy to be bleſt with his future labours, and breath eternal Defiance to it, is irreconcilable, as the quarrel of the Sons of *Oedipus*. To which prudent Reſolution, let us leave him till he can recover his Temper.

Theſe Inſtances, *Madam*, will (I hope) ſuffice to ſhew that Men are themſelves altogether as impertinent, as they maliciouſly miſrepreſent us. It is not for want of plenty of others that I content my ſelf with theſe; but I am not willing to trouble you with any of an inferiour Character. Theſe are all impertinents of *Mark* and *Note*, and have ſeverally the good fortune to find crowds of *Fools* of their own Sex to applaud and admire them. *Impertinence* is a failing, that has its *Root* in *Nature*; but is not worth Laughing at, till it has receiv'd the finiſhing ſtrokes of Art. A Man through natural defects may do abundance of incoherent, fooliſh Actions,

Actions, yet deſerve *Compaſſion* and *Advice* rather than *Deriſion*. But to ſee Men ſpending their Fortunes, as well as Lives, in a courſe of *Regular Folly*, and with an induſtrious, as well as expenſive Idleneſs running through tedious *Syſtems* of impertinence, wou'd have ſplit the ſides of *Heraclitus*, had it been his fortune to have been a Spectator. 'Tis very eaſie to decide which of theſe *Impertinents* is the moſt ſignal; the *Vertuoſo* is manifeſtly with a Competitour. For our Follies are not to be meaſur'd by the degree of *Ignorance*, that appears in 'em, but by the Study, Labour and Expence they coſt us to finiſh and compleat 'em. So that the more Regularity and Artifice there appears in any of our Extravagancies, the greater is the folly of 'em. Upon this Score it is, that the laſt mention'd deſervedly claim the preference to all others; they have improv'd ſo well their Amuſements into an Art, that the *Credulous* and *Ignorant* are induc'd to believe there is ſome ſecret Vertue,

ſome

ſome hidden Myſtery in thoſe darling Toys of theirs; when all their Buſtling amounts to no more than a learned *Impertinence* (for ſo they abuſe the Term) and all they teach Men is, but a ſpecious expenſive method of throwing away both Time and Money.

I intend not in what remains to trouble you with any more ſuch inſtances; becauſe I am ſenſible theſe have already ſwell'd this *Letter* to a *Volumn*, which was not at firſt my intent. I ſhall therefore diſpatch the remaining part of the charge in as few Words as poſſible. Amongſt the reſt *Diſſimulation* is none of the leaſt *Blemiſhes*, which they endeavour to fix upon us. This Quality, though it can't upon any occaſion deſerve the name of a *Vertue*, yet according to the preſent Conſtitution of the World, is many times abſolutely neceſſary, and is a main ingredient in the Compoſition of Human Prudence. It is indeed oftentimes criminal, but it is only accidentally ſo, as Induſtry

Diſſimulation become neceſſary.

duſtry, Wit, and moſt other good Qualities may be, according, to the Ends and Purpoſes to which they are miſemploy'd. *Diſſimulation* is nothing but the hiding, or diſguiſing our ſecret thoughts, or Inclinations, under another appearance. I ſhall not endeavour to abſolve our Sex wholly from all uſe of this Quality, or Art, (call it which you pleaſe) becauſe I think it may, upon many Occaſions, be uſed with Innocence enough, and upon ſome can't, without great Imprudence, be omitted. The World is too full of *Craft*, *Malice* and *Violence*, for abſolute *Simplicity* to live in it. It behoves therefore our Sex, as well as the other, to live with ſo much caution, and circumſpection in regard to their own Security, that their Thoughts and Inclinations may not be ſeen ſo naked, as to expoſe 'em to the *Snares*, *Deſigns*, and *Practices* of *Crafty Knaves*, who wou'd make a property of 'em; or lay 'em open to the wicked *Efforts*, and miſchievous Impreſſions of *Envy*, or *Malice*, whoſe pleaſure ſprings from the hurt

of

of others. Nothing gives our Adverſaries ſo great an advantage over us, as the knowledge of our Opinions, and Affections, with ſomething agreable to which they will be ſure to bait all their Traps and Devices. For this reaſon it is that it has been Proverbially ſaid of Old, that, *He that knows not how to Diſſemble, knows not how to Live.* The Experience of all Ages ſince has confirm'd this Obſervation, and ours no leſs than any of the preceding. This premis'd, I ſuppoſe no Wiſe Man will blame our Sex for the uſe of an Art ſo neceſſay, to preſerve 'em from becoming a *Prey* to every deſigning Man, an Art of which himſelf muſt make great uſe to deſerve that Title. Yet I am afraid, that upon enquiry our Sex will not be found to have ſo much of it as is requiſite, at leaſt not generally; our ſedentary Life, and the narrow Limits to which our Acquaintance and Buſineſs are Circumſcrib'd, afford us ſo little Variety, ſo regular a Face of things, that we want the means of obtaining

ing the Maſtery of ſo uſeful an Art, which no queſtion but we ſhou'd as ſoon acquire as Men, had we but equal Opportunities. Hence it is that *Women* are more apt to ſhow their *Reſentments* upon all *Provocations* than *Men*; and are thought naturally more *Peeviſh* and *Captious*, by thoſe that apprehend not the true reaſon; Whereas *Men* are altogether as *Stomackful*, and take *Offence* as ſoon, but they cover and ſuppreſs their Indignation better, not with a deſign to forget any Injury receiv'd, but to wreak their *Revenge* more covertly and effectually. This is another advantage Men derive from liberty of Converſation and promiſcuous Buſineſs, wherein the Variety of Contingencies they have to provide againſt, and the Diverſity of Tempers they deal with, force 'em to turn and wind themſelves into all *Shapes*, and accommodate themſelves to all Humours. There is indeed yet a higher ſort of *Diſſimulation*, which is always *Criminal*, that is, when Men not only cloud their real *Sentiments* and In-

tentions, but make Profeſſion of and ſeem zealouſly to affect the contrary; this by a more proper and reſtrain'd Name is call'd *Deceipt*, and is always us'd in an ill Senſe. This Art is moſt practic'd in Courts where *Policie*, and *Ambition* reign; there You may ſee *Enemies* hugging and careſſing one another with all outward *Expreſſions* of *Tenderneſs* and *Friendſhip* imaginable, while they are ſecretly contriving each others ruine. There you may ſee Men cringing to thoſe, they wou'd *Spurn* if they durſt, and *Flattering* thoſe they deſpiſe and rail at behind their *Backs*. The Court is a place where we come very rarely otherwiſe than as *Spectators*, not as *Actors*; as *Ornaments*, not as *Inſtruments*; and therefore are ſeldom involv'd in the guilty Practices of it. Nor is it the Court only, but all Places are infected with this Vice, where there is any Encouragement of Profit or Pleaſure to be hop'd from ſucceſsful Treachery, of which no Place is ſo barren as not to afford ſome. This Deceipt is ſo far from being

being the Vice of our Sex, that they are the common Object on which it is daily practic'd: Nothing is more frequently met with than falſe *Love* in Men, which is now grown ſo familiar, that a Company of Six of both Sexes can ſcarce meet, but a *Sham Paſſion* commences immediately, is urg'd, proteſted, and ſworn to be real with all imaginable Violence. If theſe falſe Arts, mock ſighing, and Dying prevail upon any fooliſh, eaſie, credulous *Woman*, the *Sham Lover* is blown up with the Succeſs, he is big and in Labour till he be deliver'd of the Secret, which with great ſatisfaction he proclaims in all Places where he comes: 'Tis his higheſt Exploit of *Gallantry*, which he will by no means loſe the credit of. Thus he thinks her ruin a ſtep to Reputation, and founds his own Honour upon her Infamy. This, *Madam*, is the baſeſt of Treachery; for they are not ſatisfied with the Succeſs of their falſe Promiſes, and Oaths, but they inſult over the weakneſs of a too fond *Woman*, and *Tri-*

Falſe Love commonly practic'd.

umph in her Diſhonour. I am ſorry there are any *Women* ſo fooliſh and forward, as to give hopes and encouragement to ſuch ungenerous Fellows; yet we may be aſſur'd, that they are not a quarter ſo many as thoſe vain *Boaſters* wou'd make 'em. Much more be ſaid on this head, but that I think it high time to paſs on to the next, which is *Enviouſneſs*, ſo fowl a Blot to a fair Character, that no Merit can waſh it out, or atone ſufficiently for it.

Envy is the Parent of *Calumny*, and the Daughter of *Jealouſie*. Men ſeldom envy others, till they fear being out ſtrip'd by 'em in Fortune or Reputation. It is the moſt criminal, becauſe the moſt injurious to Vertue, and worth of all our natural Failings, againſt which it's Malice is generally bent. This vice and *Jealouſie* ſeem to be more particularly hated of *Providence* than any other; For they carry their Puniſhment inſeparably along with 'em, The Envious and the Jealous need

need no other Tormentors than their own Thoughts. The Envious Man ruines his own to diſturb anothers Tranquillity, and ſacrifices his own Happineſs and Repoſe to a preverſe Deſire of troubling his Neighbours. He feeds like *Toads* upon the Venome of the Earth, and ſucks in Scandal greedily, that he may at Pleaſure diſgorge it to the greater annoyance of other Men. His mind has the *Vapours*, a Sweet Report of any one throws it into Convulſions, and Agonies, and a foul one is the Relief and Refreſhment of it. A wholeſome Air free from the Blaſts of *Detraction* and *Slander* is as certainly pernicious to him, as *Ireland* to *Frogs* and *Toads*. This Vice is generally diſclaim'd by both Sexes, yet generally practic'd by both. Men love as little to have their Reputation as their Chimneys over-topt by their Neighbours; For they think by that means their names become dark, as their Houſes do ſmoaky by the other: Yet thro' a lazy Malignity had rather pull the other's down to their Level, than build

their own up higher. This Humour prevails indeed, yet not in equal Meaſure in both Sexes. For as we have confeſſedly leſs *Ambition*, ſo have we apparently leſs of this Poiſon which uſually attends it, and ariſes from a ſelf Intereſted Principle, which makes 'em endeavour by baſe ſiniſter means to level that Merit which they think ſtands in their way to preferment, and which they deſpair of being able to ſurmount by honourable attempts. For what need any one uſe baſe Sleights to ſtop the Man, whom by fair Speed he thought he cou'd overtake. No ſooner is any Man rais'd to any Eminence in the World, but half the Sex at leaſt join in Confederacy to raiſe a Battery of Scandal againſt him, to bring him down again. *Honour* is the *Pillory* of great Deſert, whither a Man is no ſooner rais'd, but the vile Raſcally inferiour Croud gather immediately together to throw Dirt at him, and make that which was intended as a Grace, and Reward, but a more honourable Puniſhment. Our Sex ſeldom arrive

rive to this pitch of Envy, our Ambition is more bounded, and our Deſires ſooner ſatisfied. Hence it is that we are leſs troubl'd at the Proſperity of others; for not giving our ſelves the Liberty of aiming at things far out of our Power, they are the ſooner compaſs'd, and we the ſooner at Eaſe. He, that thinks himſelf Happy, is incapable of Envying another's Felicity, ſince he ſees him poſſeſs'd of nothing which either he has not, or deſpiſes not. Yet it muſt be confeſs'd that the leſſer Piques, and Grudgings are daily to be met with among us, but no leſs among Men. What is it that ſpawns daily ſuch Fryes of *Satyriſts* without Wit, and *Criticks* without Judgment, but this humour of carping, and nibbling at the Reputation of others? But they are generally abundantly furniſht with Impudence, a good Quality that commonly ſupplies largely the want of all other.

Character of a City Critick.

A *Critick* of this ſort is one that for want of *Wit* ſets up for *Judgment*; yet he has ſo much Ambition

to be thought a *Wit*, that he lets his *Spleen* prevail againſt *Nature*, and turns *Poet*. In this Capacity he is as juſt to the World, as in the other Injurious. For as the *Critick* wrong'd ever'y Body in his Cenſure, and ſnarl'd, and grin'd at their Writings, the *Poet* gives 'em Opportunity to do themſelves Juſtice, to return the Compliment, and laugh at, or deſpiſe his. He wants nothing but Wit to fit him for a *Satyriſt*, yet he has *Gall* and *Vanity* enough to diſpence with that Want, and write without it. His works are *Libells* upon others, but *Satyrs* upon himſelf, and while they *Bark* at Men of *Wit*, call him Fool that writ 'em. He takes his Malice for a Muſe, and thinks himſelf inſpir'd when he is only *Poſſeſs'd*, and blown up with a Flatus of *Envy* and *Vanity*. His great helps to Poetry are *Crambo*, and *Arithmetick*, by which he aſpires to Rhime, and Numbers, yet miſtakes frequently in the tale of his Fingers. He has a very great *Antipathy* to his own Species, and hates to ſee a Fool any where but in his Glaſs.

For

For (as he ſays) they *Provoke* him, *And offend his Eyes*: He *Follows 'em as a Dog perſues his Prey, and barks whenere* He *ſmells 'em in his way:* He *knows to ſay no more* that *Wit is ſcarce, to gingle out a Rime, or tag a Verſe: Or Cobble wretched Proſe to numerous Lines: There if* he *has a Genius there it ſhines.* His Fund of *Criticiſm* is a Set of Terms of Art pickt out of the *French Criticks*, or their Tranſlators; and his *Poetical* ſtock is a Common Place of certain *Forms* and *Manners* of Expreſſion. He writes better in *Verſe* than *Proſe*; For in that there is *Rhime*, in this neither *Rhime* nor *Reaſon*. He talks much of the *Naivete* of his Thoughts, which appears ſufficient in the Dullneſs of 'em; yet nothing but the *Phlegmatick*, Spiritleſs *Air* is his own. He rails at Mr. *Oldham* for want of Breeding and good Manners without a grain of either, and ſteals his own Wit to beſpatter him with, but like an ill *Chymiſt*, he lets the *Spirit* flie off in the drawing over, and retains only the *Phlegm*. He cenſures Mr. *Cowley* for too much

much *Wit*, and corrects him with none. The difference between Mr. *Cowley* and him is this; the one has too much Wit, and too fine for the Standard; the other not enough to blanch his base Metal, or cover the Brass of his Counterfeits. To compleat himself in the Formalities of *Parnassus*, he falls in love and tells the World, it is oblig'd to his *Passion* for his *Poetry*; but if his *Mistress* prove no more indulgent than his *Muse*, his Amour is like to conclude but unluckily. For if his Love be no warmer than his Lines, his *Corinna* may play with his Flame without danger of Burning. He pretends to have written only his sincerest Thoughts; I don't know how well his Mistress may take that from the *Lover*, but I dare swear the World did not expect it from the Poet. He is happiest at the Picture of a Rhiming Fool, for he need only to look in his Glass, and he may Copy a Country *Wit* from the City Original. If this Rhiming Humour lasts, there's a good *Sugar-Jobler* spoil'd for an ill *Poet*; yet for his comfort, Time, Improvement, and two

or

or three Books more may raiſe him to Rival *E—S*—and ſing *London*'s Triumphs, to the Envy of *Tom Jordan* of happy Memory.

You may wonder, *Madam*, why I ſhou'd give you the trouble of this Character, after I had given you my word to trouble you with no more of this Nature. I muſt confeſs, I am ſorry that ſo fooliſh an Occaſion cou'd make me forget my ſelf; but a Book newly publiſh'd happening juſt at this Juncture unluckily to fall into my Hands, I cou'd not without Indignation ſee the Scurrility and Inſolence with which Mr. *Oldham*, and Mr. *Cowley* are treated; and cou'd not but reſent a little the Wrongs done to the Memory of Men, whom the reſt of the World with Juſtice admire; and cou'd not help taking Notice upon ſo fair an Opportunity, that they are not, tho' dead, to be ſo rudely plaid with, and made the May-Game of e'ry *Splenetick Boy*. There are ſome yet living, whoſe Wit and Performances deſerve a more reſpectful treatment, than they have met with from him. But they are able

to

to revenge their own Quarrel, if they think he deſerves the honour to be Scourg'd by 'em. Nothing but Envy and a Vain Conceit of himſelf could move him to attack the Reputation of Men, whoſe Verſe will alwayes command Admiration, while his own raiſe nothing but Scorn and Indignation. If his Book-ſeller were but bleſt with half a dozen ſuch Authors, he wou'd in a ſhort time infallibly be *Stationer* general to all the *Grocers* and *Tobacconiſts* in the Town.

After this Digreſſion, *Madam*, let us return to our Subject. We ſtand yet charg'd with *Levity*, and *Inconſtancy*, two Failings ſo nearly related, and ſo generally United, that it is hard to treat of 'em apart; we will therefore conſider 'em briefly together. *Levity* is an unſteddy Humor that makes men like and diſlike, ſeek and reject frequently the ſame things upon ſlender or no Reaſons. This is the Humour of the Infancy of both Sexes, and proceeds from the ſtrength of their Appetites, and the weakneſs

neſs of their Judgments. At theſe tender Years every thing we ſee moves our Curioſities, and becauſe we think little beyond our Appetites, deſire impatiently whatever pleaſes. This wears off in proportion to the growth of our Judgments, when we begin to conſider the Fatigue, Hazard, Diſreputation, and other Inconveniences that attend unreaſonable, or inordinate Deſires. Herein our Sex have a manifeſt Advantage over the other; For it is confeſs'd on all hands that our Judgments ripen ſooner than theirs, whence of courſe it follows, that this Folly prevails not ſo long upon us, as them. 'Tis yet true, that even the moſt experienc'd and wiſeſt of Us have no ſmall mixture of it, which appears in the greateſt part of our Actions. But it is certain likewiſe, that Men have a greater proportion of it than we. From this it is that *Novelty* derives all its Charms, and that Men perſue with ſo much Eagerneſs and Impatience what they ſo ſoon ſlight if obtain'd. I appeal to the Experience

rience of all mankind, if they do not generally frame to themſelves much greater Idea's of any thing they deſire, and are unacquainted with, than they find real, when they become Familiar to 'em; and if they did not imagine greater Pleaſures, while they were in perſuit, than they met with after they were in Poſſeſſion of their Wiſhes. The Imagery of *Fancy* is, like ſome Paintings, raviſhing and ſurprizing at a due diſtance, but approach 'em near, and all the Charms of Beauty vaniſh, and they appear rough and unpleaſant. Hence it is that Men grow uneaſie, and their deſires pall ſo ſoon upon the full enjoyment of their wiſhes; they ſee then the imperfections as well as Beauties of what they coveted, which glitter'd ſo far of, and like the Moon appear'd all Luſtre and Smoothneſs, but when arriv'd at, all dark and uneaven. Theſe Fallacies Men are more ſubmitted to than we, by thoſe very Priviledges which give 'em in ſome things the advantage over us. The variety of Buſineſs,

and

and Society they run through, the large acquaintance they contract, give 'em encouragement to aſpire to, and hopes to obtain many difficult things, which our Sex ſeldom lift their Thoughts up to. I know this aſpiring Humour of theirs is generally call'd *Ambition*, and I allow the Term to be proper; but their Ambition works upon their Levity, which only can make them Barter certain Eaſe, Peace and Security, for uncertain Pomp and Splendour; and forſake a Condition they know to be good, for one they know no more of, than that it ſhines, and that it Glitters, and ſo part with the true Jewel for the falſe one. Theſe are the ſerious and applauded Follies of Mankind, and ſhew the Weakneſs and Levity of thoſe we call the greateſt, and wiſeſt Men, that ſacrifice the Eaſe and Pleaſure of their lives to *Popular Breath*, and ſounding Titles, which is like bartring a ſmall Diamond for a large Glaſs Bubble.

Incon-

Inconſtancy is ſo like *Levity*, that little more needs to be ſaid of it, only that it is commonly reſtrain'd to the change of Affections in regard to Perſons, and ſo is chiefly concern'd in Love and Friendſhip. It is founded upon Levity, thro' which we firſt make an injudicious Choice, and are afterwards as unreaſonably diſguſted with it. This happens oftner in *Love*, than *Friendſhip*; becauſe the Impreſſions of *Love* are more ſuddenly receiv'd, and the Effects of it more violent, than thoſe of *Frendſhip*; and the Deſires, which are commonly kindled by one ſingle Perfection, ſuch as *Beauty* or *Wit*, not being ſuddenly anſwer'd, are in Proceſs of time extinguiſh'd, or abated by obſervation of ſome diſguſtful Imperfection or other in the Perſon belov'd. This is indeed the true Reaſon, why *Love*, which is generally ſo hot at firſt, cools commonly ſo ſuddenly; becauſe being generally the Iſſue of Fancy, not Judgment, it is grounded upon an over great Opinion of thoſe Perfections, which firſt ſtrike us, and

which

which fall in our Eſteem upon more mature Examination. From whence it is likewiſe, that Men are leſs conſtant in their Affections than we; for Beauty only being generally the Object of their Paſſion, the Effect muſt neceſſarily be as fading as the Cauſe; their Love therefore being only the reſult of wonder and Surprize, is abated by Familiarity, and decays, as they wear off, by Degrees. Beſide, that, a Love ſo Founded is liable to be raviſh'd by any Superiour Beauty; or if not ſo, yet the Novelty of the Former once worn off, the New Comer has the aſſiſtance of Fancy, the Slave of Novelty, to gain the Superiority. This is the Cauſe why ſo few real and laſting Paſſions are found amongſt Men. For Charms depending upon, and owing their Power to Fancy, can maintain no Conqueſts any longer, than that is on their ſide, which is as inconſtant as the Wind. In this alſo we are leſs faulty, than they; For, not uſually fixing our Affection on ſo mutable a Thing as the *Beauty* of a *Face*, which a thouſand

Women conſtanter Lovers.

accidents may deſtroy, but on *Wit*, *Good Humour*, and other *Graces* of the *Mind*, as well as of the *Body*, our Love is more durable, and conſtant in proportion to the longer continuance of thoſe Qualities in the Object. Neither indeed have we the means, or temptation, to be Fickle and inconſtant ſo ready as Men have; For Modeſty, and the Rules of Decency obſerv'd among Us, not permitting to us the Liberty of declaring our ſentiments to thoſe we love, as Men may, we dare not indulge a wanton Fancy, or rambling Inclination, which muſt be ſtiffled in our own Breaſts, and cou'd only give us a hopeleſs Anxiety, unleſs we were able to inſpire the ſame Paſſion for us in them; which it were vain to expect, without breaking thro' all reſtraint of *Modeſty* and *Decorum* at the price of our Fame and Reputation, which I hope few are ſo daring as to venture. Beſides this, our Tempers are by Nature calm, ſedate, and tender, not apt to be ruffl'd, and diſturb'd by Paſſions, and too fearful to enterprize

prize any thing in ſatisfaction of 'em; theirs on the contrary, bold, active, and uneven, eaſily ſuſceptible of all manner of Deſires, and readily executing any Deſigns to gratifie 'em. Thus are we debarr'd the liberty of chuſing for our ſelves, and confin'd to pleaſe our ſelves out of the number that like and addreſs to us, of which if we fix our Affections upon any one, we are generally fixt and unmoveable, as having neither the Inclination to, nor opportunity of Inconſtancy, that the Men have. I don't deny, but that there may be ſome among us guilty of this Fault, but they are vaſtly ſhort of the Number of Men involv'd in the like Guilt, amongſt whom it is now grown ſo faſhionable, that is become no Scandal; but is daily juſtified, and the Treachery boaſted of as high Gallantry. The Crimes therefore of ſome few *Women*, ought to be no reproach to the Sex in general. Of Infidelity in Friendſhip I ſhall ſay little, becauſe I think there are ſo few Inſtances of any thing that deſerve the Name,

that ſcarce any Age has been ſo fruitful as to produce two Pair of real and true Friends. I know that the Name in commonly given to ſuch as are linkt by any Ties of Conſanguinity, Affinity, Intereſt, mutual Obligations, Acquaintance, and the like: But theſe are ſuch Friendſhips (if they may be call'd) ſo as are always contracted with a tacit Reſerve to Intereſt on both ſides, and ſeldom laſt longer than the Proſperity of either Party, and during that are frequently renounc'd upon ſlight Diſobligations, or languiſh and die of themſelves. Yet if I may preſume to give my Opinion in a Caſe, where matter of Fact does not appear, I think we ſhou'd be the more Faithful even in this too: For as we are leſs concern'd in the Affairs of the World, ſo we have leſs Temptation from Intereſt to be falſe to our Friends. Neither are we ſo likely to be falſe thro' Fear; becauſe our Sex are ſeldom engag'd in matters of any Danger. For theſe Reaſons it is, our Sex are generally more hearty and ſincere in the ordinary

Friendſhip.

Women truer Friends than Men.

ordinary Friendſhips they make than Men, among whom they are uſually clogg'd with ſo many Conſiderations of Intereſt, and Punctilio's of Honour; to which laſt perhaps are owing the greateſt part of thoſe honourable Actions, which are miſtakenly imputed to Friendſhip. For ſomething done to ſalve Honour, commonly puts a Period to all Friendſhip, with unfortunate Perſons; whom Men think they may afterward grow cold too without Reproach.

Theſe are the moſt conſiderable Imperfections, or at leaſt thoſe, which with moſt Colour of Reaſon are charg'd upon us, as general Defects; and I hope, *Madam*, I have fairly ſhown, that the other Sex are both by Intereſt and Inclination more expos'd, and more Subject to 'em than we, *Pride*, *Luſt*, *Cruelty*, and many more, are by the Declaimers againſt us thrown into the Scale to make weight and bear us down, but with ſuch manifeſt Injuſtice, that without giving my

ſelf any further trouble, I dare appeal to any reaſonable *Man*, and leave him to decide the Difference. I know there was a *Tullia*, a *Claudia*, and a *Meſſalina*; there was likewiſe, a *Sardanapalus*, a *Nero*, a *Caligula*; but if the Sexes in general are to be reproach'd with, and meaſur'd by theſe; Human Race is certainly the vileſt Part of the Creation. 'Tis very ill *Logick* to argue from Particulars to Generals, and where the Premiſſes are ſingular, to conclude Univerſally: But if they will allow us the Liberty they take themſelves, and come to numbering the Vicious of both Sexes, they will certainly out poll us by infinite Numbers. It were therefore better Policy ſurely in them, to quit a way of arguing, which is at once ſo falſe, and ſo much to the diſadvantage of the Cauſe they contend for; and when they can, by ſound Arguments, make out any Advantages their Sex has over ours, other than what I have already granted, I am ready to be convinc'd, and become their Convert; and I make no

More ill Men than Women.

no doubt but every ingenuous Man will do as much by me. Thus I have endeavour'd to vindicate our Sex, from the unjuſt Imputations with which ſome unreaſonable, malicious Men wou'd load us: For I am willing to think the greater, or at leaſt the better Part of their Sex, more generous than to encourage their Scandal. There remains nothing more, but to ſhew that there are ſome neceſſary Qualifications to be acquir'd, ſome good Improvements to be made by Ingenious *Gentlemen* in the Company of our Sex.

Many Advantages from Womens Company.

Of this number are *Complacence*, *Gallantry*, *Good Humour*, *Invention*, and *an Art*, which (tho' frequently abus'd) is of admirable uſe to thoſe that are Maſters of it, the *Art* of *Inſinuation*, and many others. 'Tis true, a Man may be an Honeſt and Underſtanding Man, without any of theſe Qualifications; but he can hardly be a Polite, a Well Bred, and Agreable, Taking Man, without all, or moſt of theſe.

Without 'em, *Honeſty*, *Courage*, or *Wit*, are like Rough *Diamonds*, or *Gold* in the *Ore*, they have their intrinſick Value, and Worth before, but they are doubtful and obſcure, till they are poliſh'd, refin'd and receive *Luſtre*, and *Eſteem* from theſe.

Complacence to be learn'd by it.

The Principal of theſe is *Complacence*, a good Quality, without which in a competent Meaſure no Man is fitted for Society. This is beſt learnt in our Company, where all Men affect Gaiety, and endeavour to be agreable. *State News*, *Politicks*, *Religion*, or private *Buſineſs* take up the greateſt Part of their Converſation, when they are among themſelves only. Theſe are Subjects that employ their Paſſions too much, to leave any room for *Complacence*; they raiſe too much heat to ſuffer Men to be eaſie and pleaſant, and Men are too ſerious when they talk of 'em, to ſuppreſs their natural Temper, which are apt to break out upon any Oppoſition. Men are as apt to defend

fend their Opinions, as their Property, and wou'd take it as well to have their Titles to their Eſtates queſtion'd, as their Senſe; and perhaps in that they imitate the Conduct of our Sex, and do, like indulgent Mothers, that are moſt tender of thoſe Children that are weakeſt. But however it be, I have obſerv'd when ſuch Arguments have been introduc'd even in our Company, and by Men that affect Indifference, and abundance of Temper, that very few have been able to ſhew ſo much Maſtery, but that ſomething appear'd either in their Air, or Expreſſion, or in the Tone of their Voices, which argued a greater Warmth, and Concern, than is proper for the Converſation of *Gentlemen*, or the Company of *Ladies*. Theſe Uneaſineſſes happen not ſo often among us, becauſe the Men look upon us to have very little Intereſt in the Publick Affairs of the World, and therefore trouble us very ſeldon with their grave, ſerious Trifles, which they debate with ſo much earneſtneſs among one another

another. They look upon us as Things design'd and contriv'd only for their Pleasure, and therefore use us tenderly, as Children do their Favourite Bawbles. They talk gayly, and pleasantly to us, they do, or say, nothing that may give us any Disgust, or *Chagrin*, they put on their chearfullest Looks, and their Best Humour, that they may excite the like in us; They never oppose us but with a great deal of Ceremony, or in Raillery, not out of a Spirit of Opposition, (as they frequently do one another) but to maintain a pleasant Argument, or heigthen by variety of Opinions an agreable Entertainment. Mirth, and Good Humour reign generally in our Society, Good Manners always; For with us Men shew in a manner, the Reverse of what they are one to another: They let their thoughts play at Liberty, and are very careful of the Expression, that nothing harsh, or obscene escape 'em, that may shock a tender Mind, or offend a modest Ear. This Caution it is, which

which is the Root of *Complacence*, which is nothing but a Deſire to oblige People, by complying with their Humours. 'Tis true ſome Tempers are too Obſtinate, and froward, ever to arrive at any great Heigth of this good Quality, yet there is nothing ſo ſtubborn, but it may be bent. Aſſiduity and conſtant Practice will contract ſuch Habits, as will make any thing eaſie and familiar, even to the worſt contriv'd Diſpoſition; but where Nature concurs, Men are ſoon Perfect. This is one great advantage Men reap by our Society, nor is it to be deſpis'd by the Wiſeſt of 'em, who know the uſe of this Accompliſhment, and are ſenſible, that it is hardly, if at all, to be acquir'd, but by converſing with us, For tho' Men may have Wit and Judgment, yet the Liberty they take of thwarting, and oppoſing one another makes 'em Eager and Diſputative, Impatient, Sowre, and Moroſs; till by converſing with us, they grow inſenſibly aſham'd of ſuch Ruſtick Freedom. The truth of this

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is Evident from the Obſervation of the *Univerſities*, and *Inns* of *Court*, I mean thoſe Students in 'em that lead a more recluſe and Monaſtick Life, and converſe little with our Sex. They want neither Wit, nor Learning, and frequently neither Generoſity, nor Good Nature, yet when they come into gay, tho' Ingenious Company, are either damp'd and ſilent, or unſeaſonably Frolickſom and Free, ſo that they appear either Dull, or Ridiculous.

Gallantry acquir'd by our Company.

Nor is *Complacence* the only thing theſe Men want, they want likewiſe the *Gallantry* of thoſe Men that frequent our Company. This Quality is the heigth and perfection of Civility, without which it is either Languiſhing, or Formal, and with which it appears always with an engaging Air of Kindneſs, and Good Will. It ſets a value upon the moſt inconſiderable Trifles, and turns every Civility into an Obligation. For in ordinary Familiarities, and civil Correſpondencies, we regard not ſo much what, as how

how things are done, the Manner is more lookt upon than the Matter of ſuch Courteſies. Almoſt all Men that have had a liberal, and good Education know, what is due to Good Manners, and civil Company. But till they have been us'd a little to our Society, their Modeſty ſits like Conſtraint upon 'em, and looks like a forc'd Compliance to uneaſie Rules, and Forms of Civility. Converſing frequently with us makes 'em familiar to Men, and when they are convinc'd, as well of the Eaſineſs, as the Neceſſity of 'em, they are ſoon reconcil'd to the Practice. This Point once gain'd, and they become expert in the common, and neceſſary Practices. Thoſe that have any natural Bravery of Mind, will never be contented to ſtop there; Indifference is too cold and Phlegmatick a thing for 'em, a little Formal Ceremony, and common Civilities, ſuch as are paid to e'ry one of Courſe will not ſatisfie their Ambitious Spirits, which will put 'em upon endeavouring for better Receptions, and obliging thoſe, whom

whom they can't without Reproach to themſelves offend. This is the Original, and firſt Spring of *Gallantry*, which is an Humour of Obliging all People, as well in our Actions as Words. It differs from *Complacence*, this being more active; that more paſſive: This inclines us to oblige, by doing, or ſaying, after our own Humours, ſuch things as we think will pleaſe; that by ſubmitting to, and following theirs, a Man may be *Complacent* without *Gallantry*, but he can't be *Gallant* without *Complacence*. For 'tis poſſible to pleaſe, and be agreable, without ſhewing our own Humours to Others; but 'tis impoſſible without ſome regard to theirs: Yet this Pleaſure will be but faint and languid, without a Mixture of both. This mixture of Freedom, Obſervance, and a deſire of pleaſing, when rightly tempered, is the true Compoſition of *Gallantry*; of which, who ever is compleat Maſter, can never fail of being both admir'd, and belov'd. This Accompliſhment is beſt, if not only to be acquir'd by converſing

Differences betwixt Complacence and Gallantry.

converſing with us; for beſides the natural Deference, which the Males of every obſervable Species of the creation pay to their Females, and the Reaſons before given for *Complacence*, which all hold good here, there is a tender Softneſs in the Frame of our Minds, as well as in the Conſtitution of our Bodies, which inſpires Men, a Sex more rugged, with the like Sentiments, and Affections, and infuſes gently and inſenſibly a Care to oblige, and a Concern not to offend us.

Invention, improv'd by our Society.

Hence it is that they employ all their *Art*, *Wit*, and *Invention* to ſay, and do things, that may appear to us, ſurprizing and agreable, either for their Novelty, or Contrivance. The very End and Nature of Converſation among us retrench abundance of thoſe things, which make the greateſt part of Men's diſcourſe, and they find themſelves oblig'd to ſtrain their Inventions to fetch from other Springs, Streams proper to entertain us with. This puts 'em upon beating and ranging o're the

the Fields of Fancy to find ſomething new, ſomething pretty to offer to us, and by this means refines at the ſame time their Wit, and enlarges, and extends their Invention; for by forcing 'em out of the common Road, they are neceſſitated to invent new Arguments, and ſeek new ways to divert and pleaſe us, and by reſtraining the large Liberty they take one with another, they are compell'd to poliſh their Wit, and File off the Roughneſs of it. To this they owe, the Neatneſs of Raillery, to which abundance of Gentlemen are now arriv'd; For Contrariety of Opinions, being that which gives Life, and Spirit to Converſation, as well Women as Men, do frequently hold Arguments contrary to their real Opinions, only to heigthen the Diverſion, and improve the pleaſure of Society. In theſe the utmoſt Care is taken to avoid all things that may ſound harſh, offenſive, or indecent, their Wit is employ'd only to raiſe mirth, and promote good Humour, Conditions that can't well be obſerv'd, when

Men

Men contend for Realities, and diſpute for the Reputation of their Wit or Judgment, and the truth of their Opinions. 'Tis true, theſe improvements are to be made only by Men, that have by Nature an improvable Stock of Wit and good Senſe; For thoſe that have it not, being unable to diſtinguiſh what is proper for their Imitation, are apt to Ape us in thoſe Things which are the peculiar Graces and Ornaments of our Sex, and which are the immediate Objects of Sight, and need no further Reflection, or thinking. This Affectation is notorious in our Modern *Beau*'s, who obſerving the Care taken by ſome of our Sex in the ſetting of their Perſons, without penetrating any farther into the Reaſons Women have for it, or conſidering, that what became them, might be ridiculous in themſelves, fall to licking, ſprucing and dreſſing their Campaign Faces, and ill contriv'd Bodies, that now, like all Fooliſh Imitatours, they out-do the Originals, and out-powder, out-patch, and out-paint the Vaineſt

Fools not fit Companions for Women.

and moſt extravagant of our Sex at thoſe Follies, and are perpetually Cocking; Bruſtling, Twiring, and making Grimaces, as if they expected we ſhou'd make Addreſſes to 'em in a ſhort Time. Yet ought not this to diſcourage any Ingenious Perſon, or bring any Scandal upon our Converſation, any more than Travelling out to be brought into Diſrepute, becauſe it is obſerv'd, that thoſe, who go *abroad Fools, return Fops*. It is not in our power to alter Nature, but to poliſh it, and if an Aſs has learnt all his Paces, 'tis as much as the thing is capable of, 'twere abſurd to expect he ſhou'd chop *Logick*. This is ſo far from being an Objection againſt us, that it is an Argument, that none but Ingenious Men are duely qualified to converſe with us; Who by our Means have not only been fitted, and finiſh'd for great things, but have actually aſpir'd to 'em. For 'tis my Opinion, that we owe the Neat, Gentile Raillery in Sir *George Etheredge*, and Sir *Charles Sadley's* Plays, and the Gallant Verſes

Verſes of Mr. *Waller* to their Converſing much with Ladies. And I remember an Opinion of a very Ingenious Perſon, who aſcribes the Ruine of the *Spaniſh Grandeur* in great meaſure, to the ridiculing in the Perſon of *Don Quixot*, the *Gallantry* of that *Nation* toward their *Ladies*. This Opinion however Ingenious carries me beyond the Scope and deſign of the preſent Argument, and therefore I ſhall leave all further Conſideration of it to thoſe that are more at leiſure, and leſs weary than I am at preſent.

There remain yet ſome things to be ſpoken to, but I muſt confeſs to you, *Madam*, that I am already very much tired, and I have reaſon to fear that you are more. When you enjoyn'd me this Task, I believe, you did not expect, I am ſure, I did not intend ſo long a Letter. I know I have written too much, yet I leave you to judge whether it be enough. One Experience I have gain'd by this Eſſay, that I find, when our Hands are in, 'tis as

hard to ſtop 'em, as our Tongues, and as difficult not to writ, as not to talk too much. I have done wondring at thoſe Men, that can write huge Volumes upon ſlender Subjects, and ſhall hereafter admire their Judgment only, who can confine their Imaginations, and curb their wandring Fancies. I pretend no Obligation upon our Sex for this Attempt in their Defence; becauſe it was undertaken at your Command, and for your Diverſion only, which if I have in any meaſure ſatisfied, I have my Ambition, and ſhall beg nothing farther, than that my ready Obedience may excuſe the mean Performance of,

Madam,

Your real Friend, and

Moſt humble Servant.

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